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Nicaragua might be the next best hot spot for catching big blue marlin. Will Drost caught this beauty midleap.



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EDITORIAL



Marlin Stocks Identified

News of a recent scientific discovery came across my desk a few weeks back. Tim Simpson, editor and general manager of the Australian magazine *BlueWater Boats and Sportsfishing* and a fellow Billfish Foundation board member, forwarded news of an interesting development in his part of the world.

Samuel Williams, a research student from the University of Queensland, began collecting fin-clip samples from black marlin tagged and released by anglers in addition to those found in fish markets where recreational fishing did not occur. He worked closely with the Australian sport-fishing community and received funding from the Queensland Game Fishing Association and the Game Fishing Association of Australia's Research & Development Foundation.

Williams sought to determine if genetic differences existed between blacks caught off the east and west coasts of Australia and those from the Gulf of Carpentaria on Australia's northern coast. Conventional wisdom held that only one stock of black marlin existed in the central Indo-Pacific, and the fish spawned along Australia's Great Barrier Reef. These fish seem to return to the same spawning site year after year, and most observers considered the Reef the black's sole spawning ground. Williams, working with famed billfish researcher Dr. Julian Pepperell, would try to prove or disprove this assumption.

It's well established that black marlin can cover huge distances in open water, a fact confirmed by tagging data. The fish aggregate seasonally off northeastern

Australia, the central east Pacific Ocean, northwestern Australia, the central western Indian Ocean, the Gulf of Thailand, and the South and East China seas. Scientists now consider some of these areas potential spawning grounds.

At the International Billfish Symposium in 2013, compelling evidence emerged pointing to a second known black marlin spawning ground in the South China Sea. This caused Williams and Pepperell to speculate that more spawning aggregations for black marlin existed and that these might, in truth, constitute separate stocks.

Williams and Pepperell identified three distinct stocks of black marlin: the southwest Pacific Ocean, the eastern Indian Ocean and the South China Sea. The stock in the southwest Pacific originated from samples collected along the coasts of New South Wales and Queensland. Samples identifying the South China Sea stock came from a fish market at the Port of Chenggong in southeastern Taiwan, and the eastern Indian Ocean clippings derived from Broome, Dampier and Exmouth in Western Australia. This discovery raised the obvious question of into which stock the fish found in the Gulf of Carpentaria belong because the Gulf sits squarely between the southwest Pacific area and the eastern Indian Ocean.

This discovery has a practical application in addition to simply being interesting. Knowing that distinct stocks exist should lead to separate assessments for each of the three stocks by fishery scientists to improve management of this most magnificent game fish.

John Brownlee
Editor-in-Chief

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> OFF THE DEEP END



The Best Museum Ever!

This past February, on my annual pilgrimage from Orlando, Florida, to Miami to attend the Miami International Boat Show, I managed to squeeze in a little treat for myself. Dan Jacobs, my colleague here at work, had to attend a meeting at the International Game Fish Association Fishing Hall of Fame and Museum with chief operating officer Mike Myatt, and since Jacobs was riding down with me, I got to spend some time wandering around the facility.

As an Air Force brat growing up in Germany, I probably visited every museum and church on the continent of Europe. I spent an enormous amount of weekends and holidays heading off with my parents to see a particular chapel or visit a museum or castle filled with dungeons and torture tools. I was a nerdy kid and ate that stuff up.

I still have a fondness for the stillness and quiet of all museums, but the IGFA Hall of Fame remains one of my favorites. You can spend hours perusing the exhibits and reading the fine print on all the awards and photographs. The museum also houses the fantastic E.K. Harry Library of Fishes, where I spent many hours researching stories for *Marlin* Magazine. The library archives countless photographs, magazines, articles and artifacts related to fishing. Gail Morchower, the IGFA librarian and museum manager, has saved many a story in *Marlin* by digging up just the right picture or quote. She's a great resource, and I'm not quite sure what the IGFA is going to do if she ever decides to retire.

I have to admit, however, that my main motivation to visit the museum is a very personal one. About 15 years ago, I got a call from Mike Leech, president of the IGFA at the time. The museum was undergoing some renovations and updating, and Leech wanted to know if I had any good tagging shots for a conservation display. It just so happened that I'd been fishing with Leech in Venezuela right before I got the call, and I'd taken quite a few good shots of him tagging a sailfish. I sent it in along with a few others and soon heard back that they were going to use a couple of them in the display! Obviously, I was overjoyed, and I still consider it one of my most cherished accomplishments. Every time I visit the museum, I rush back to that same room to make sure that they are still there ... and they are.

I got to wander around the museum for an hour or so, checking out the 270 mounts hanging in the Hall of Records, fighting a sailfish on a simulator, and ogling all the old-time tackle displays.

Myatt invited Jacobs and me to attend the induction ceremony for the Legendary Captains and Crew ceremony taking place that evening. I'd already agreed to attend and sit with Capt. Rick Murphy and the gang from the *Chevy Florida Insider Fishing Report*, and since my good friend Capt. Peter B. Wright was adding another Hall of Fame induction to his long list of honors, I wouldn't have missed it for the world. The most surprising thing about the ceremony was the fact that the incredibly verbose Wright only spoke for about 90 seconds. If you know Peter, you know that must have set some kind of record!

Dave Ferrell
Editor-at-Large

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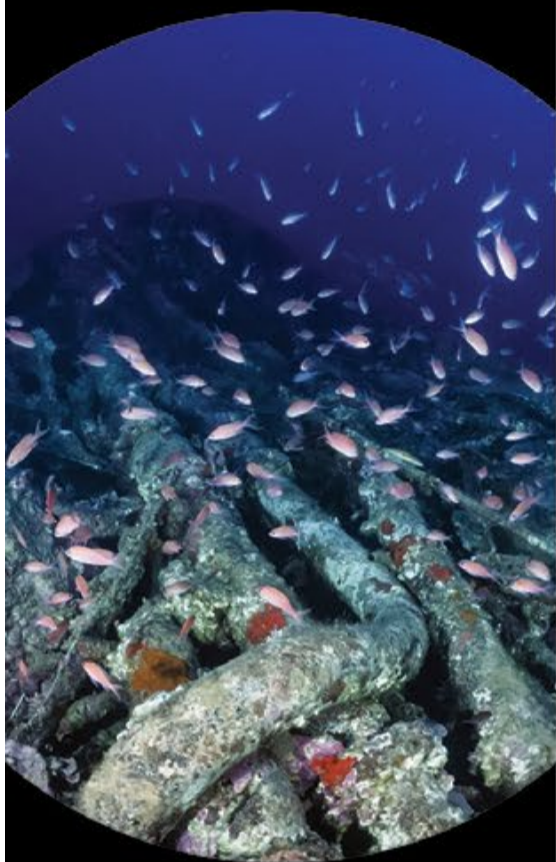
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LETTERS

MORE FROM DUTCH

THANKS FOR INCLUDING the article on the Rybovich Lifetime Conservation Awards by The Billfish Foundation in your February issue [Blue Water Currents]. Unfortunately, my eyesight prevented my attendance to receive this prestigious award. My talk can be viewed on the New Orleans Big Game Fishing Club's website at nobgfc.com. I remember the Rybovich sport-fisherman the year I fished the Bimini Tuna Tournament — Elwood K. Harry was top angler, many years ago. Memories — Yes, at age 90, that is what we have. So many anglers are no longer here. Good health and happiness to all.

Herman "Dutch" Prager, Mandeville, Louisiana

PUERTO RICO BOUND

I am going to Puerto Rico this April for a family reunion, and I would like to charter a boat or two for one day. I am a longtime subscriber to *Marlin* and love to billfish. I tear out articles from *Marlin*, *Sport Fishing*, and *Salt Water Sportsman* and keep them in a destination file by location. Unfortunately, my articles from Puerto Rico are quite dated — 1989. Do you have any current contacts or recommendations in the area? Now 57, I have been marlin fishing since college. Our family used to own the 44-foot Rybovich express, *Miramar*, but we have been out of the boat-ownership business for quite some time. Luckily, I have lots of good friends with boats and am part of the core crew of *Inspiration*, a 55-foot Jarrett Bay that won the Big Rock tournament last year. Thanks in advance, and I LOVE *Marlin* Magazine.

Jeff Beach
Reidsville, North Carolina

We have sent inquiries to our contacts in Puerto Rico and will reply via email, but good luck in advance! — Ed.

AMAZING SPINNERS

In the Travel Briefs article a few issues back ["Antigonish, Nova Scotia," December/January 2015] I noticed that the fisherman shown caught a giant bluefin tuna on a spinning reel. I find this intriguing, since all of the bluefin fishing I've encountered was done with heavy conventional rods and reels. I must admit to being somewhat

unfamiliar with spinning gear in general and did not realize such heavy spinners had been developed. I tend to think of these reels as appropriate for casting to much smaller game, like bluefish and smaller striped bass. But as is always the case, times change. Maybe soon we'll be hearing about marlin being regularly targeted and caught on these amazing new reels as well.

Bob Fowler
Baltimore

Many tackle companies, including Shimano, Penn, Daiwa and others have designed large capacity spinning reels capable of exerting very high amounts of drag pressure. These are mostly used for deep jigging or casting poppers to big fish, but they can also be used for trolling. Don't be surprised if a marlin falls to a spinner in the near future. — Ed.

BAIT ENLIGHTENMENT

I read the conservation column by Andrew Cox ["Don't Forget the Little Guys," February 2015] on forage fish with great interest. It's inconceivable to me that we often fail to adequately protect the most basic component of the food web: the base forage species. Without them, the whole chain breaks down because, as we're all taught from day one in our fishing lives, "big fish eat little fish." And it starts with the smallest of them all. Let's hope we adopt a more enlightened policy in the near future.

David Harper
New York City

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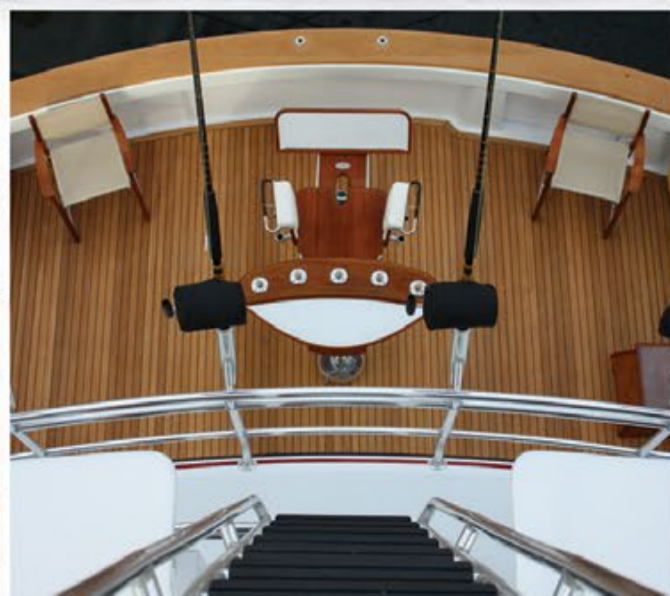
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Miami Boat Show Finds New Home



The Miami International Boat Show will relocate beginning in 2016 to the Miami Marine Stadium on Virginia Key,

according to the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA). The 6,566-seat Marine Stadium once hosted events such as powerboat racing and concerts, but it became largely unused after Hurricane Andrew made landfall in September 1992.

During a city commission meeting in early 2015, the city of Miami pledged \$16 million to pay for improvements to the 15-acre area outside the waterfront stadium, primarily for the boat show but also for other events. No formal agreement exists between the NMMA, which owns and operates the boat show, and the city of Miami, but the

For the first time since 1969, the Miami International Boat Show will find a new home at the Miami Marine Stadium in 2016.

Marine Stadium will host the show at least through 2017. The city has the opportunity to restructure the initial contract after five years, and it will benefit largely from the five-day event. The Miami International Boat Show was in need of a new home because the Miami Beach Convention Center, the longtime home of the Miami International Boat Show, will undergo a complete overhaul and renovation beginning shortly after the 2015 show.

“In 2016, the Miami International Boat Show will celebrate its 75th year in Miami. What better way to commemorate the significance of this historic annual tradition than by bringing the show to Miami Marine Stadium — one of Miami’s most iconic and beloved marine venues,” says NMMA President Thom Dammrich. “With unique features to accommodate the more than 100,000 boaters who travel from throughout the globe to experience the best the boating industry has to offer, Miami Marine Stadium is poised to be the home of the boat show in 2016 and beyond.”

IGFA RECOGNIZES EXTRAORDINARY CAPTAINS AND CREW

On Feb. 11, 2015, the International Game Fish Association recognized extraordinary captains and crew members who made, and continue to make, significant contributions to the sport-fishing industry, during the fifth annual IGFA Legendary Captains and Crew event. Named for one of the greatest saltwater charter captains of all time, the Tommy Gifford Award was awarded to those captains or crew members who not only provided leadership in their trade and earned the respect of their peers, but also made a meaningful contribution to the sport of recreational angling. Each nominee must also have demonstrated that he or she embraced the ethical angling standards created by the founders of the IGFA throughout their career. In 2015, the IGFA honored Capt. Al Anderson, Capt. Christian Benazeth, Emmett “Mutt” Cobble, Capt. Jose Wejebe, and Capt. Peter B. Wright with the Legendary Captains and Crew award.



The IGFA awarded Emmett “Mutt” Cobble and four others the Tommy Gifford Award at its annual Legendary Captains and Crew event.

COURTESY HILARIO CANDELA (LEFT), COURTESY IGFA / IGFA.ORG (RIGHT)

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Anderson began his charter career fishing on *Prowler* out of Snug Harbor in Rhode Island in 1967, and he started tagging bluefin tuna for the late Frank J. Mather III at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute. Anderson tagged more than 60,000 game fish in his career, with several years of more than 1,000 bluefins, and he is credited by the IGFA with tagging more fish for science than anyone else worldwide.

Benazeth, the IGFA representative

for Senegal and Mauritania from 1987 to 1998, led himself or his clients to at least 20 world records for light-tackle or fly-fishing for sailfish, tuna, marlin, leerfish and Spanish mackerel. During the past 30 years, Benazeth promoted catch-and-release fishing as well as other conservation efforts for sport fishing in his home waters.

Cobble was a lifelong mate who gained the reputation of being meticulous. Cobble was great in the

cockpit and unmatched as a wire man. During his career, Cobble wired many world records in St. Thomas, USVI, and many black marlin exceeding 1,000 pounds off Australia.

Wejebe was widely considered one of the all-time best tournament guides in the Florida Keys. Born in Cuba, he was tying flies and fishing Miami's Biscayne Bay by the age of 12, and he looked up to his mentors Flip Pallot, Stu Apte and Lefty Kreh. He first appeared on Mark Sosin's TV show, then on numerous episodes of *Walker's Cay Chronicles* until ESPN picked up his own TV show, *Spanish Fly*. Wejebe was also a huge supporter of the Make-A-Wish Foundation and the Redbone Tournament Series.

Peter B. Wright grew up in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and began working on charter fishing boats out of Hillsboro Inlet while in grade school. He first fished off Australia's Great Barrier Reef in 1968, and he fished every season in Cairns until 2009. As a captain, Wright caught more marlin over 1,000 pounds than any captain or angler in history, and he won dozens of tournaments as well as setting numerous world and national records.

STEPHANIE CHOATE DONATES TOURNAMENT WINNINGS

Angler Stephanie Choate, winner of the 2014 Fishing World Cup, recently donated \$100,000 from her tournament winnings to Wild Oceans, a conservation group dedicated to the future of the ocean through conservation-minded anglers. Choate, profiled in *Marlin's*



Stephanie Choate (left) presented a check to Wild Ocean's president Ken Hinman (right) during the group's 2014 annual meeting.

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“Belles of Bluewater” feature [November 2014] for her angling accomplishments, travels the world fishing competitively while spreading the word for marine conservation. She presented Ken Hinman, president of Wild Oceans, with a check at the organization’s 41st annual meeting in Islamorada, Florida, in December. “I support Wild Oceans because I have seen firsthand the amount of good they have done with all the resources they have,” Choate says. Says Hinman of her gift: “Stephanie’s example of giving back to the sea, which enhances our lives in so many ways, is inspiring and at the same time challenges all of us to do even more.”

CAPTAIN HOOK RECORDS 30,000 RELEASES

The storied *Captain Hook*, once run by Capt. Ron Hamlin, tallied its 30,000th billfish release on Jan. 27, 2015, with Capt. Eddie Bairez at the helm. Angler Todd Martin caught the milestone fish and adds the release to the impressive list of accomplishments on *Captain Hook*’s resume, which includes its



Once run by legendary Capt. Ron Hamlin, Capt. Eddie Bairez and the crew aboard *Captain Hook* released the boat’s 30,000th billfish on Jan. 27, 2015, in Guatemala.

single-day best of 124 fish and its 2006 record season total of 2,885 releases.


Hamlin brought the boat to Guatemala in 1996 and accounted for 22,700 of the

COURTESY CAPT. EDDIE BAIREZ (LEFT), RICHARD GIBSON (OPPOSITE)

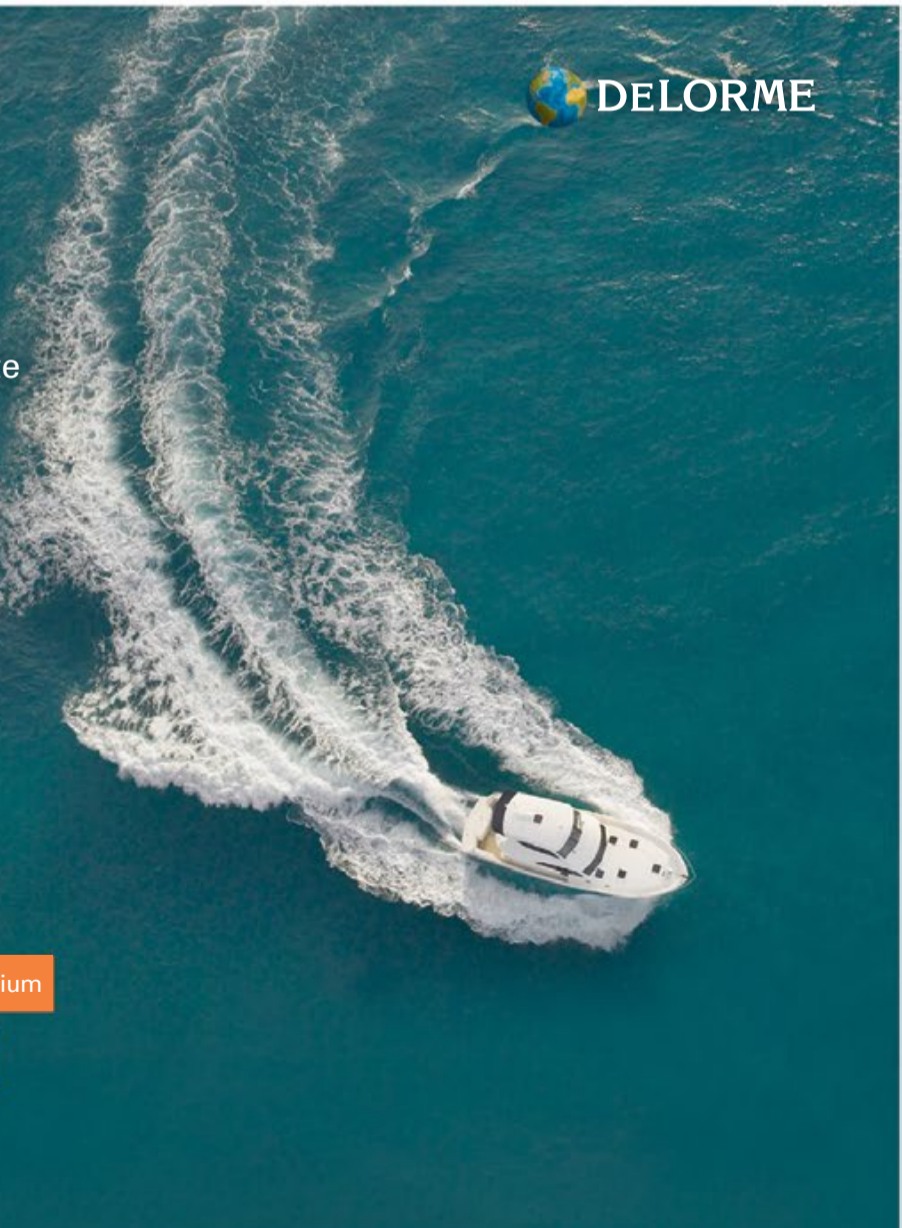
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 **DELORME**



The fleet fishing out of Marina Cap Cana in the Dominican Republic released a total of 1,390 white marlin and 900 blue marlin during the 2014 fishing season.

boat's total releases, and Bairez mated for Hamlin before taking over the helm

in 2007. "Thanks to all clients, friends and anyone that came to fish with us for

this past 19 years," Bairez says. "Thank you for 30,003 and counting!"

CAP CANA FINISHES A HOT 2014 FISHING SEASON

Marina Cap Cana, on the eastern tip of the Dominican Republic, completed its 2014 season with 232 days of fishing and 2,632 billfish releases. The first marlin release of 2014 occurred on Jan. 2, and the fishing continued largely throughout the year. There are two peaks in activity during the year when both blue and white marlin frequent the waters around Cap Cana. White marlin activity surges from April to July, and in 2014, the fleet released a total of 1,390 white marlin in 108 days of fishing. Nine hundred blue marlin were released in the 121 days from June to October, averaging seven blues per day. The 2015 season looks promising as well, and many tournaments will call Marina Cap Cana home during the year. In 2015, the Cap Cana International Billfish Shootout, the Cap Cana White Marlin and the Cap Cana Classic should attract many of the top boats traveling in the Caribbean. 🌐



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Look to the Skies

ADVANCES IN SATELLITE TECHNOLOGY AID ENFORCEMENT

The unparalleled benefits of satellite tag technology enable researchers to track movements of billfish across the world's oceans. Real-time tracking currently allows constant insight into the migrations of sharks and turtles, and hopefully it will for billfish as well in the near future. Scientists aim to use this real-time data to analyze fish movements to and from spawning grounds or closed areas in hopes of impacting management decisions. However, rather than concentrating on the movements of individual fish, managers plan to use recent developments in satellite technology to monitor vessels and fishing activity directly to aid in fisheries enforcement.

We needn't worry that satellites will track us or our boat during our next trip offshore. Instead, satellites should help reduce the growing trend of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in remote destinations where countries lack the means to enforce fisheries in their own waters as well as the fishing taking place on the high seas, where enforcement remains nearly impossible. Often called "pirate fishing," IUU fishing has become a concern not only here in the United States for several reasons, but it has also

developed into an international problem drawing the attention of countries and regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs).

The Presidential Task Force on Combatting Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing and Seafood Fraud, co-chaired by the departments of State and Commerce, recently released 15 recommendations to the president for

Project Eyes on the Seas utilizes advances in satellite and tracking technology to enforce and counter IUU fishing.

a comprehensive framework to address both IUU fishing and the overwhelming problem of seafood fraud regarding domestic seafood and imports. "Seafood is one of the most traded commodities in the world," said Catherine Novelli, Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment. "The task force submitted strong recommendations to President Obama designed to stop the trade of illegal fish and promote the sale of sustainable seafood. IUU fishers gain an unfair advantage in the marketplace over law-abiding fishing operations as they do not pay the cost of sustainable production."

According to the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, in 2013 U.S. commercial fishermen landed 9.9 billion pounds of finfish and shellfish worth \$5.5 billion. Conversely, IUU fishing accounted for 11 to 26 million tons and caused an estimated global loss of \$10 billion to \$23 billion to the legitimate seafood industry. The large revenues spur illegal trafficking operations and undermine economic opportunities for U.S. fishermen and others engaged in legal fishing. Some experts estimate that one in five fish caught is landed illegally, and in some areas, as much as 40 percent of the total catch could be caught unlawfully.

"The U.S. fishing industry, which supports nearly one million American jobs, is threatened when illegal foreign operators undercut the U.S. market with cheaper, illegally caught imports," said Karen Sack, director for International Oceans at the Pew Charitable Trusts. "The task force recommends measures to catch these operators when their vessels tie up at U.S. ports." The Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA), a key component in curtailing illegal fishing, designates which ports foreign-flagged vessels may seek to enter. It also restricts port-of-entry access by vessels found to be involved in IUU fishing and placed on an IUU list by RFMOs. Pending authorization by Congress and the president's signature as of early February, this agreement provides the legal avenues for the United States to do its part in restricting IUU vessels from unloading illegal fish into the market. An initiative by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the PSMA more importantly creates an international agreement to battle IUU fishing.

Additional recommendations

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from the Presidential Task Force aim to level the playing field for legitimate fishermen as well as increase consumer confidence in the sustainability of seafood sold in the United States and abroad. Partnerships between international governments, the RFMOs and nongovernmental organizations seek to further the communication and information available about where and when IUU fishing occurs, as well as to track down and stop repeat offenders.

To help meet this challenge, the Pew Charitable Trusts partnered with Satellite Applications Catapult, a U.K. government initiative, to pioneer a system that merges satellite tracking and imagery data with fishing vessel databases and oceanographic data to monitor seas across the globe. The cutting-edge technology enables government officials and other analysts to identify and monitor unlawful activities in global waters, particularly IUU fishing.

The development, known as Project Eyes on the Seas, advances a long-term effort to dramatically reduce IUU fishing in developing countries and on the high seas. The theft of fisheries resources persists largely because industrial-scale operations function beyond the reach of law enforcement, and they get away with it simply by injecting the illegal fish into the global marketplace. To counter this, the new initiative will provide real-time comprehensive monitoring and analysis to track the activity of vessels fishing in a country's waters or the fishing activity of a vessel prior to entering a country's port to offload fish or provide service. The system analyzes multiple sources of live satellite tracking data, and it links with the information about a ship's ownership history and country of registration. In doing so, it provides a comprehensive source of up-to-the-minute data to alert officials to suspicious vessel movements and fishing activity.

Project Eyes on the Seas will initially monitor the waters surrounding Easter Island, a Chilean territory, and the Pacific island nation of Palau. In 2014, Palau announced it will close all of its waters to commercial fishing, and it will lean heavily on the use of satellite technology to aid in enforcement. Both locations generally lack enforcement resources, and the new satellite technology aims to increase the effectiveness of the resources they do have. Over the next three years, Project Eyes on the Seas plans to grow in capability and scope as more countries and RFMOs commit to using its capabilities to monitor IUU fishing.

The lack of collaborative fisheries management during the last several decades, particularly on an international level, not only led to severe overfishing, it also exemplified the Tragedy of the Commons. Deterring this type of activity should continue to be a top priority in the United States and internationally, for the health of the resources as well as for global economic reasons. The recent collaboration among countries, RFMOs and nongovernmental organizations with the use of satellite technology provides a solid framework moving forward in the battle against IUU fishing. Curbing IUU fishing will not occur overnight, nor will it happen without challenges, but the goals remain clear, and we should all keep our eyes on them. 🌐



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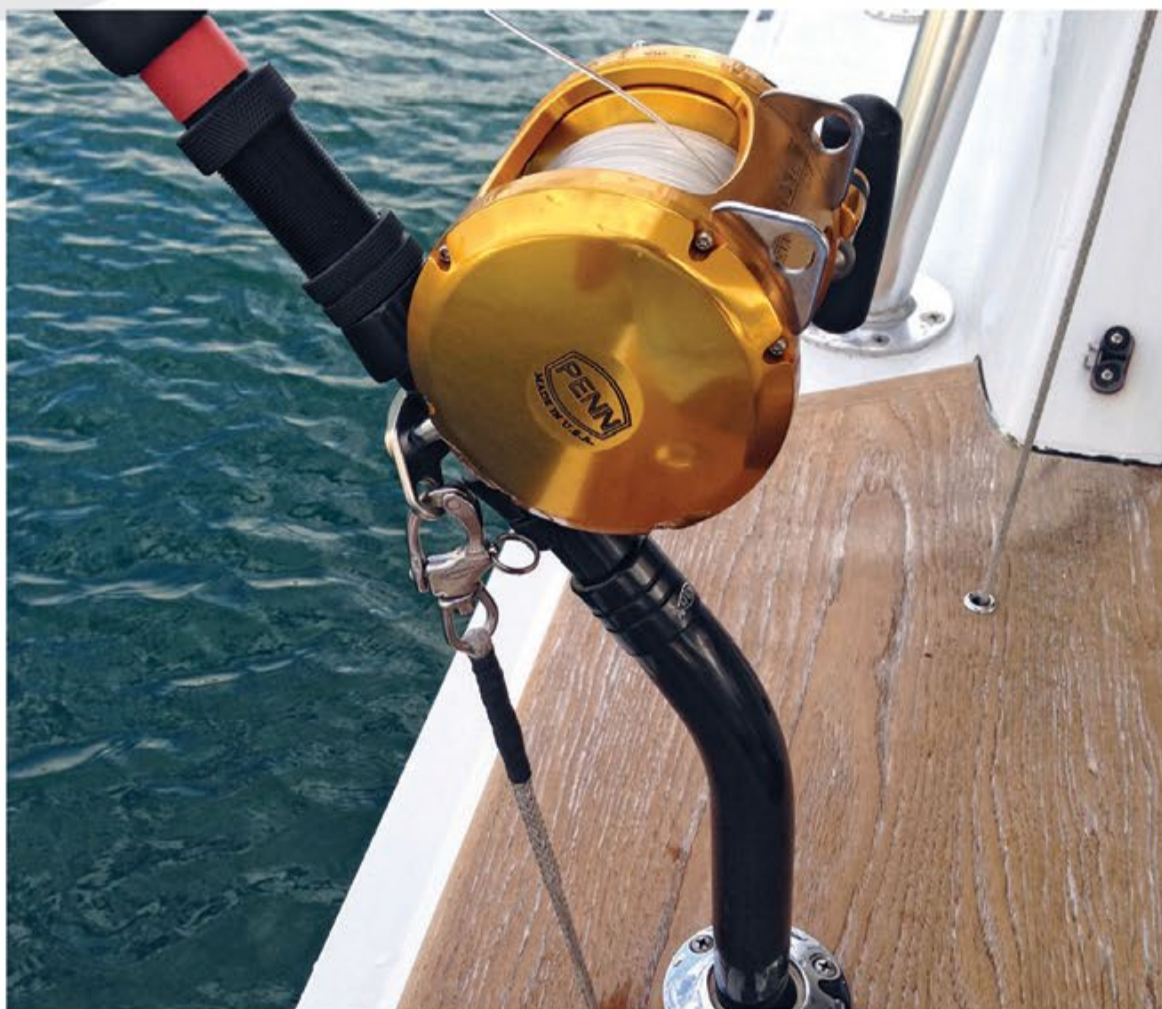
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Tips & Techniques



Securing Your Teaser Rods

On *Nomad*, we do quite a bit of teaser fishing, pulling both bridge and cockpit teasers on every trip. After trolling a lot of miles, we've encountered a couple of problems that required some attention while using our cockpit teaser rods. While teasing a fish on the cockpit teaser rod, the rod sometimes tried to lift up or jump out of the gimbal pin in the bottom of the swiveling rod holder, especially if the mate is reeling hard on a hot fish, or trying to reel with one hand and work the rigger halyard with the other. When the rod pops up, it makes it difficult to work the rod or tease the fish, and it causes the mate to

stop winding while the rod is re-secured into the gimbal. Any pause while trying to tease the fish could cost you the shot. To help hold down the teaser rod, we installed a Rupp rigger halyard fair-lead next to the rod holder, with a cam cleat mounted below just like a regular outrigger halyard system. We then use a swiveling snap shackle to attach the tie-down to the reel harness lug. This allows us to release the snap shackle quickly, even when under load, in case we need to move the rod in a hurry.

Capt. Randy Baker
Destin, Florida

ALWAYS IN THE SAME PLACE

Working as a freelance mate during college found me jumping on as many as four different boats in a week between Venice, Louisiana, and Destin, Florida. Many times, boats would lack everything needed to have a great shot at whatever our intended quarry would be. As a result, I made sure I didn't step on a boat without my two gear bags filled with an arsenal of offshore tackle and a label maker. The label maker can be a mate's best friend not only to help you stay organized, but also to help others in case they need to locate something for



you. This is important when I am busy rigging baits or prepping the spread — I often find myself asking for an item that someone else might or might not know about. We all have our own way of organizing, and not everyone knows the difference between various hooks or which box contains the wahoo rigs or bridling needles. Labeling the boxes and compartments cuts down on confusion and possible frustration. It is more handy than one might think, and anyone who goes through my bags can quickly find anything I need. In a sport where conditions can change in an instant, there is a lot to be said for an extremely organized gear bag, tackle center or cockpit. It can truly make the difference in having a great day on the water.

Capt. Woody Woods
Orange Beach, Alabama

TIP OF THE MONTH

Win These **Hobie Polarized's Mojo Sunglasses**! Send us an original tip and a photo or illustration of that tip, and if we use it, we'll send you a pair of Hobie Polarized's Mojo sunglasses. Protecting you from the elements and harmful UV rays, the Mojo frame features a sport-wrap frame and "fast-back" temple, as well as a signature paddle-inspired design and integrated hinges to cut back on frame weight. Check them out at hobiepolarized.com. Enter by emailing your tips to tips@marlinmag.com, or you can mail them to us at *Marlin Magazine*, Tips & Techniques, 460 N. Orlando Ave., Suite 200, Winter Park, FL 32789.





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GIVE YOUR SHORE CORD A FACE-LIFT

After my last trip to the yard for an annual haul out, my shore cord was in need of a good cleaning. Years of sun and weather seem to make it harder and harder to keep them looking good, and they require more frequent attention. A friend and I were talking about how to better protect our cords and talked about covering them with split-loom tubing. During a trip to the local electronics store, I found a 50-foot section of white 1¼-inch split-loom for \$25. They also had various colors and sizes of split-loom available should you need them. I chose to use the 1¼-inch split-loom on my 50-amp cords because it fits well and leaves about a ¼-inch gap on the bottom of the cover, allowing for any condensation to drain out. Now after four months, the white split-loom tubing still looks good, and the shore cord under looks as good as it did after I last cleaned it. The shipboard CableMaster cord only takes a couple of minutes to reinstall after a trip and looks great on the dock.

Capt. Dāv Carpenter
Newport Beach, California

CLEAN LINES MAKE A HAPPY BOAT

Since you spend quite a bit of hard-earned money keeping your sport-fisherman shipshape and ready for action, why would you tolerate tying up with a set of crusty, dirty dock lines? And since a good set of new lines can cost a pretty penny as well, why not do what you can to prolong their life and keep them looking brand-spanking new? We've found that the easiest and least time-consuming way to clean dirty

dock lines is to throw them in your washing machine like a pair of jeans. Run them on a high-agitation level with hot water and a normal dose of detergent. If you are using white lines, throw in a bit of bleach to brighten them up as well. Don't forget the fabric softener because it makes the lines come out of the washer clean and soft, just like new.

John Bunton
Fort Lauderdale, Florida



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Ask Peter Wright

IN EACH ISSUE, Capt. Peter B. Wright answers one reader's question regarding any aspect of big-game fishing. In this issue, Brennan Taylor of Port Aransas, Texas, asks for advice on trolling rods.

Q I'm reaching out to you for advice on stand-up trolling rods. I looked at all the popular brands, and the prices keep pushing me away. To spend \$800 for a stick is just crazy to me, but it seems I have no choice. I fish in the Gulf of Mexico out of Port Aransas, Texas, and I fish a majority of the offshore tournaments down here. I usually pull dead ballyhoo and sometimes lures to target mainly sails, whites and blues. For baitfishing, I use Shimano TLD 50s rigged with 800 yards of 50-pound Dacron backing, and I use 200 yards of 50-pound monofilament top shot. I keep the drags set at 8 pounds on strike, and I use wind-on leaders and circle hooks 100 percent of the time. When pulling lures, I use Shimano Tiagra 50Ws with the drags set at 16 pounds on strike, rigged with 900 yards of Dacron backing with 200 yards of 80-pound monofilament top shot. I tie directly to a snap swivel and use J hooks in the lures.

As you know, you never quite know what you're going to run into fishing in the Gulf. I'm looking for the most versatile rod out there that will last season after season, one that can be used for baitfishing or pulling lures. I prefer something light, but stronger than a mule, and I prefer rollers unless you talk me out of it.

A Hi Brennan, and thanks for the question. First of all, even with all the info you gave me about your fishing style, you failed to tell me about something that is even more important than the rod: the type of harness and gimbal you use. Even when you hook a decent blue marlin with light drag settings at strike, the drag you need to bring it to the boat can be excruciatingly painful, and this is especially true if the harness and gimbal are of poor quality or are not properly adjusted.

TO ASK PETER A QUESTION, contact him at pbwfish@aol.com.

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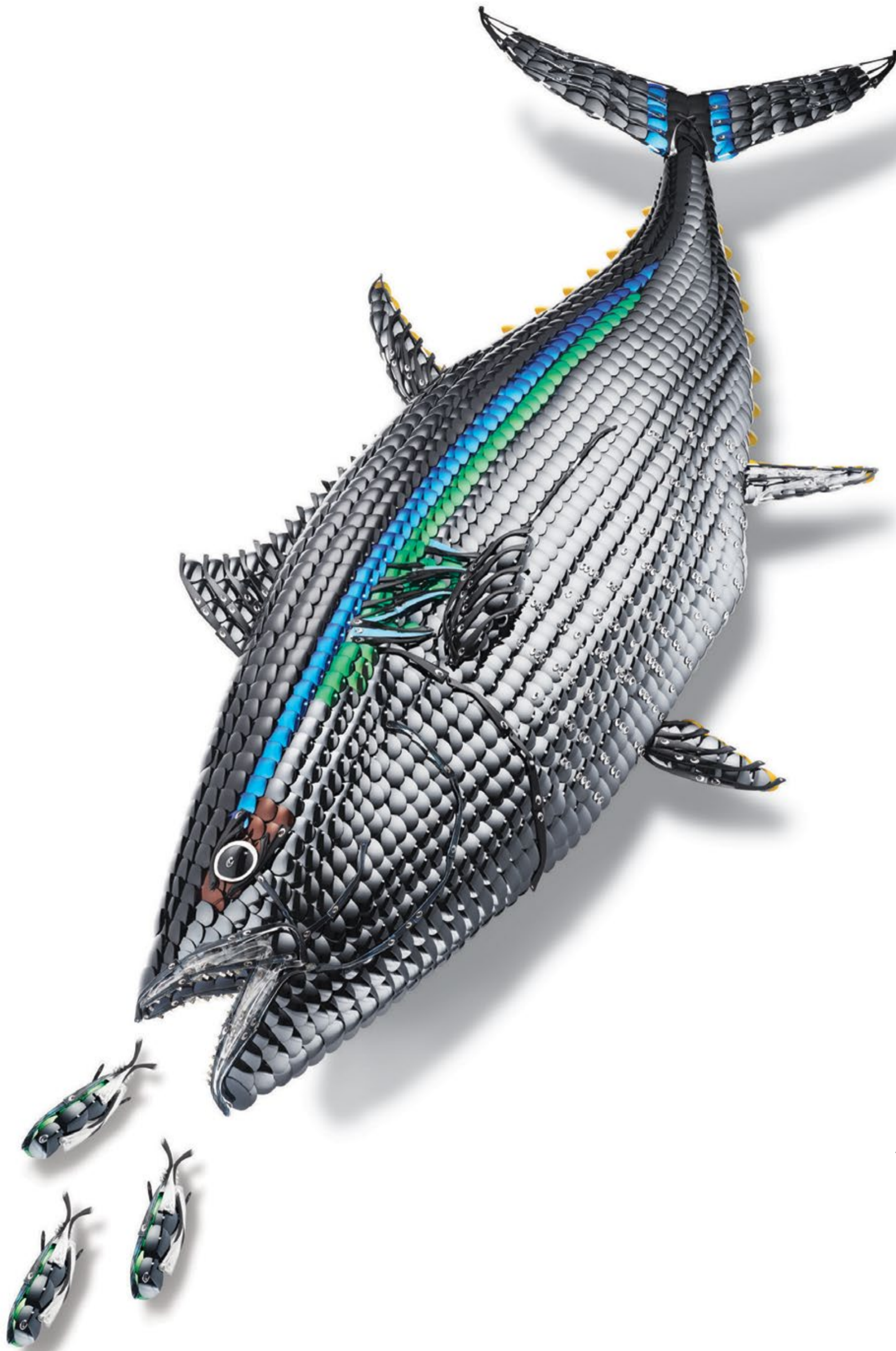


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Underwater lights attract bait and game fish, so they do have a practical use. But they mostly make your boat look cool.

into that sort of thing. It might not help you catch fish, but you'll sure fit in at South Beach.

Many of us know a little about how sound moves through water from researching our depth sounders. Like sound, light moves through water, but some colors and color temperatures of light can shine farther and offer more brightness. In my own completely nonscientific observations while walking the dock, I seem to notice more bait and fish around blue and green lights than white ones, perhaps because blue light travels farther through salt water than any other.

INCANDESCENT VERSUS LED

With regular incandescent bulbs, we used wattage to determine the brightness, along with soft- or bright-light designators. An incandescent bulb of 100 watts or 60 watts uses identical filaments heated to the same temperature. To increase light output, you have to increase wattage, which is why they generate heat and are considered energy wasters. With incandescent bulbs, light is emitted equally all around the bulb, which also results in lost light.

With LED lighting, the fixture forms an integrated system with integral LED lights, fixture housing and optics, which makes them deliver almost all of their light in a focused direction. An LED's beam of light produces no infrared energy, giving the illusion that it produces no heat. LEDs do generate heat during the conversion of electricity to light, so manufacturers usually use heat sinks to pull heat away from the LED and disperse it into the air surrounding the fixture, making them burn cooler.

Got a Light?

UNDERWATER LIGHTING SYSTEMS PERFORM BETTER THAN EVER

When underwater lights appeared on the sport-fishing market, they were large and had to be installed from the outside in, which required haul outs to install and maintain them, even to change a bulb. They typically had a short life and burned hot, needing water to cool them. These early editions created a lot of additional expense and headaches because they were not inexpensive, leading many folks — including myself — to view them as a gimmick and not an essential piece of gear. Most fishermen liked the idea of using the lights as fish attractors, but the biggest selling point became dock appeal. Folks like a lit-up boat at the dock.

Today, that not-so-user-friendly scenario has completely changed: Companies overcame the heat issues by using LED lights, and servicing issues vanished thanks to innovative housings that can be serviced from within the boat. Manufacturers have

also developed, and integrated into their products, materials to make robust, longer-lasting and higher-quality units in a larger variety of sizes to fit specific applications. Now, they even have lights that change colors — not only on demand but automatically if you're



**Aqualuma
Gen4 18 Series**

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AQUALUMA

Aqualuma has been producing underwater lighting since 2005 on Australia's Gold Coast, with a distribution facility in South Florida. The company utilizes a patented injection-molded, virtually indestructible polymer housing that is tested to 1,300 feet below sea level. The new Gen4 18 Series features the same housing the 12 and 6 Series use, so upgrading becomes seamless. The largest through-hull

option offered by Aqualuma, the 18 Series, can be serviced from within the boat. The 18 Series comes in brilliant white with 4,920 low-light fixture lumens and ultra blue with 14,100 low-light fixture lumens. There is a three-year warranty on the internal components and a six-year warranty on the housing. The lights come in 12 volt with a 2.6-amp draw or 24 volt with a 1.3-amp draw, along with 12 feet of number 2 conductor wire.

OceanLED 50XFM Pro Series HD Allure



OceanLED
150XFM/250XFM
Pro Series HD Allure

OCEANLED

U.K.-based OceanLED started in 2005 with underwater LED lights, and it also has a distribution facility in South Florida. With a low-profile aluminum bronze bezel and hard-anodized aluminum body with a Tritonium-coated lens, the company's all-new 50XFM and 150XFM Pro Series HD Allure lights can be serviced from within the boat. They feature ultra white and midnight blue LEDs with a 60-degree beam angle. With increased lumen output, over 40,000 LED life hours and 6,500 fixture lumens, the lights feature AC and DC power options, including 110-volt 600mA draw and 240-volt 275mA draw. The AC driver comes with a power cable. The 12-volt version has a 5.5-amp draw and the 24-volt model draws 2.75 amps. The DC driver also comes with a power cable, with waterproof Deutsche plug-and-play quick connects and reverse-polarity protection.

LUMISHORE

Lumishore, another U.K.-based company, focuses only on underwater lighting, with U.S. offices on Florida's west coast. The company's TIX 202 Interchangeable Thru Hull comes in white, blue and green. Lumishore has engineered the light in a high-conductivity marine-grade aluminum



Lumishore TIX 202
Interchangeable Thru Hull

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bronze with a borosilicate lens that can be fully serviced or interchanged from within the hull. Featuring a two-year warranty, the lights have 4,100 fixture lumens, a 60-degree beam angle and an

of red, green, blue and white color-changing underwater lights in 2014, along with the first color-changing RGBW underwater dock light. The new Barracuda B12 light comes in



“I seem to notice more bait and fish around blue and green lights than white ones, perhaps because blue light travels farther through salt water than any other.”

estimated 50,000-hour life. The 12-volt version draws 3.6 amps and the 24-volt model draws 1.8 amps. There is also an optional AC power supply. The TIX 202 comes with overvoltage, reverse-polarity and thermal rollback protections.

BLUEFIN LED

Bluefin LED is a new kid on the block that also hails from the U.K. The company introduced a complete range

an aluminum bronze marine-grade housing with 4,500 fixture lumens, and it can be mounted on the transom or hull side. Featuring over 50,000 hours of LED life, the 12-volt model draws 4.6 amps and the 24-volt draws 2.35 amps. The B12 has overvoltage and undervoltage protection, with reverse-polarity and active thermal protection as well. It also features a high-impact polymer lens with a

60-degree beam angle, and it comes with a two-year warranty.

The popularity of underwater lights has increased tremendously, and walking down any dock, or in an anchorage at night, you will surely see some boats lit up. With a wide selection and improved technologies, a solution that fits your needs and performs to your expectations will be easy to find. So when you are ready to light it up, several great options exist for your particular application. ☺



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BILLFISH UNDISCOVERED LAND

Nicaragua Offers Virtually
Untapped Billfish Potential

Story by Sam White

Photos by Antonio Varcasia

PANAMA AND COSTA RICA get tons of press for their red-hot fishing for both marlin and sailfish. To the north, Guatemala lives up to its reputation as one of the hottest sailfish destinations in the world year after year. Even El Salvador has come on strong in the last few seasons. But what about Nicaragua, sandwiched right there in the middle — it must offer some amazing sport-fishing opportunities, right? Those who know say, absolutely: Nicaragua could be the hottest billfish destination in Central America that you've probably never fished. It's a matter of geography. Spin the globe (or your Google Earth app) to Central America and you will see why.

NG'S *ERED*

Nicaragua rivals
neighboring
Costa Rica and
Panama as a
premier Latin
American billfish-
ing destination.



BILLFISHING'S UNDISCOVERED LAND

For those of us past a certain age, Nicaragua conjures images of Ronald Reagan, a Marine light colonel named Oliver North and the Iran/Contra affair, big news in the 1980s. Many considered Central America wild and woolly in those days, but thankfully those are just distant memories. Today, Nicaragua has emerged as a safe and attractive destination both for tourists and expatriates from around the world, thanks to a terrific climate, a friendly population, low overall cost of living and some attractive deals on real estate, among other things. And the fishing? It's off the charts good, mostly unexplored and virtually untouched.

There are a few distinct fishing hot spots along Nicaragua's Pacific coast: San Juan del Sur, just across the border from Costa Rica to the south; Guacalito, a little farther up the coast; and Puesta del Sol, near Chinandega up the coast to the north. The country's vast Caribbean border also holds incredible untapped potential, but the Pacific is the ticket for chasing marlin and sailfish.



Rum Runner, owned by Carlos Pellas, is one of the top local boats and is always on top of the hot bite.



Tranquilo is one of a growing number of American boats relocating to Nicaragua. The proximity of great fishing and the laid-back lifestyle appeal to many owners.

LOOKING SOUTH: SAN JUAN DEL SUR

Set on the shoreline along a half-moon shaped bay, San Juan del Sur (SJDS) is a small seaside community that's fairly typical of Central America. That laid-back lifestyle — and the promise of phenomenal fishing — first attracted Ken Cofer to relocate his 57-foot Spencer *Tranquilo* to San Juan del Sur in February 2012. "It's a great place to fish from about May through October when the wind is onshore," he says. "It seems like the fish don't arrive until it starts to rain in Costa Rica. At times, the sailfish are only 3 to 5 miles off the beach, in as little as 300 feet of water."

Joe Crawford has also seen great days off SJDS as captain of Carlos Pellas' *Rum Runner* since 2003. "We've experienced 20-plus-release days just 12 miles offshore," he reports. "Although the run to the shelf is about 50 miles from the bay, there are more subtle depth changes that hold sailfish, some marlin and all the dorado you want a lot closer to home." Crawford also says that the area offers excellent fishing for roosterfish, a sentiment echoed by Cofer. These striped brawlers, with their comb-like dorsal fins, prowl the beaches and drop-offs and are usually targeted with a frisky live bait bridled to a stout circle hook. Most of the local charter boats will offer combination offshore/inshore trips, so it's entirely possible to catch a few sails and then wrap up the afternoon chasing roosters in the surf.

THE LAP OF LUXURY: GUACALITO AND MUKUL

Mukul Beach Golf and Spa shows just how far Nicaragua has come in recent years. This unique five-star resort has already claimed a host of awards since



its February 2013 opening in Guacalito de la Isla. Pellas, a businessman and entrepreneur, developed Mukul (mukulresort.com) as a way to integrate luxury within the stunning landscape of his native country. With sweeping rainforests meeting the deep blue Pacific here, guests tend to agree with his vision.

Pellas, an IGFA Board of Trustees member, takes sport fishing seriously and can often be spotted at tournaments and marinas throughout Central America. And while Mukul does not have a marina at this time, it does offer some phenomenal sport-fishing opportunities. The resort has a new 31-foot Pursuit named



GETTING THERE & GETTING AROUND

Most visitors will fly into the Nicaraguan capital city of Managua from U.S. and European destinations. The Augusto C. Sandino International Airport (ACS) serves most destinations within the country. From there, options include taxis, car rentals or hiring a private car with driver. For the most part, the roads in Nicaragua are very good, well above the usual Central American standards. San Juan del Sur is also accessible by road from northern Costa Rica.

Puesta del Sol has several boats available for charters, both inshore and offshore, but be sure to book early as the selection of boats is limited. The marina also serves as a port of entry for visiting vessels. They will summon the appropriate customs and immigration officials to meet boats entering Nicaragua, but be sure to call ahead; the wait can be a long one, especially around tournament time, with several vessels clearing at the same time. Captains should bring a bagful of patience as well as their *zarpe*, or clearance from their previous port of departure.

marina. It also hosts the Flor de Caña International Billfish Tournament each year. This tournament, celebrating its 14th anniversary in 2015, has arguably done more to promote Nicaraguan billfishing than anything else.

“Even a few years ago, it was more of a reason to party than to fish competitively,” Crawford says. “But

“The waters off Mukul are uncharted territory. The abundance of sailfish is astonishing and rivals those found in Costa Rica and Guatemala. And most of the time, you’re fishing by yourself.”

The Spirit of Mukul, powered by twin 300 hp Yamaha outboards and fully rigged for both offshore and inshore action. The runs here average from 12 to 50 miles offshore for both sailfish and marlin. “The waters off Mukul are uncharted territory,” Pellas says. “The abundance of sailfish is astonishing and rivals those found in Costa Rica and Guatemala. And most of the time, you’re fishing by yourself.”

CENTER STAGE: PUESTA DEL SOL

Situated just outside the small town of Chinandega and in the shadow of the smoking San Cristóbal Volcano, Puesta del Sol (marinapuestadelsol.com) offers one of the country’s best marina facilities. Accessible by a well-marked channel from the ocean, it has all the amenities that owners would expect from a world-class

these days, the tournament brings in boats from not just Nicaragua, but also El Salvador, Costa Rica, Guatemala and the United States. They use certified observers, and the prizes have also risen significantly. It’s been fun watching this group improve their skills and become world-class fishermen and also to see the younger generation become more involved in sport fishing.”

I fished this tournament in 2012

“We fished a few days prior to the tournament, and on one of those days, we released 51 sailfish — so we knew the fishing would be pretty good.”

and 2013 with Capt. Bubba Carter on *Tijereta*. We were head-to-head with some of the best boats in the Pacific from start to finish, and it amazed me to see just how far the locals had progressed. A few still wanted to pull lures on heavy tackle — and consume enough rum to float a 31 Bertram — but most had made the transition to dredge fishing with circle-hooked ballyhoo, hands down the best way to rack up numbers on both blue marlin and the far more numerous sailfish. And while I missed the 2014 tournament, the 16 participating boats released 606 sailfish and five blue marlin over the course of three days, an average of 38 billfish per team. *Xta-Sea*, a Hatteras 60 GT owned by Alexis Chamorro and captained by John LaGrone, emerged victorious with 78 sailfish releases. Chamorro says,

“We fished a few days prior to the tournament, and on one of those days, we released 51 sailfish — so we knew the fishing would be pretty good.”

LaGrone says, “The edge off Puerto del Sol is a great example of a fisherman’s paradise. It starts 40 miles out and extends north and west, with turns, drop-offs and hilltops similar to St. Thomas. It took me a few trips to really map out the 100-fathom curve and the different bowls and twists, and I still have plenty of places to look after eight years!” LaGrone has fished for Central American billfish since 1993, and he has run *Xta-Sea* for Chamorro since 2007. “We always leave the dock with the anticipation of great fishing off Nicaragua,” he says. “We’ve had plenty of double-digit days on sailfish and others where we’ve released two blue marlin a

BACK ASHORE

Not all the sights to see lie offshore. Nicaragua is known as the land of lakes and volcanoes, both of which are popular destinations. Lake Nicaragua, the largest body of fresh water in Central America, is home to several species of fish found nowhere else in the world. The historic city of Granada is nearby and is another great side trip for visitors to the country. Surfing is also popular in Nicaragua thanks to a remarkably consistent swell combined with some great beach and river-mouth breaks along the coast. American expat Lance Moss runs Surfari Charters (surfaricharters.com) where guests can fish, surf and sightsee all in one trip; if nothing else, his outgoing personality is guaranteed to be entertaining.

The Flor de Caña International Billfish Tournament is scheduled for Aug. 12-15, 2015, out of Puesta del Sol. It offers outstanding competition, terrific prizes and great parties back ashore, including a legendary poolside pig roast — not to mention plenty of Flor de Caña rum. Accommodations are limited, though, so be sure to register early if you’re interested in participating. Contact tournament director Roberto Sandino via email at rsandino@casapellas.com for more information.



The Flor de Caña International Billfish Tournament takes place Aug. 12-15 this year. This tournament rivals many more well-established events and is becoming a huge draw for Nicaragua due to great fishing combined with top prizes and exceptional dock parties.



day, too. I know for a fact that if we concentrated more on marlin hunting, our numbers would increase considerably.”

FISHING THE AREA

As with any new destination, the learning curve can be steep. Off



Nicaragua, the bite depends largely on the current. “I think the currents are the most important thing in deciding where and how to fish in the north and the south,” says Crawford. “It is very current sensitive in the south due to the large areas, with little or no structure

to hold the bait, so the current really needs to be coming in from the south for San Juan del Sur and Mukul to work well. Up north, it’s all about the bait. In August, the bite has been on the west-facing edge the last four years, with the current predominantly pushing north to south.” Most everyone is pulling a spread of circle-hooked ballyhoo over dredges and squid daisy chains, with the new breed of artificial and mudflap-style dredges becoming very popular and productive. Thirty-pound tackle is the norm, but with the abundance of sailfish, it’s fun to scale down to 20 or even 12, keeping a heavier outfit handy in case a blue one shows up on a teaser.

As with other Central American destinations, the subject of fish-aggregating devices or FADs is a popular and hotly contested one. According to my sources, there are currently no large recreational FADs deployed off Nicaragua as there are in Costa Rica and Panama. Local fishermen use simple FADs made of palm fronds and polypropylene rope, but these seldom last more than one season or a big storm. When asked about the use of FADs, Roberto Sandino,



Alexis Chamorro’s *Xta-Sea*, captained by John LaGrone, is another top local boat, typically found in the winner’s circle in tournaments in Nicaragua and other Latin American venues as well.

tournament director for the Flor de Caña International, said, “I have mixed feelings about them. If it’s catch-and-release, it lets the recreational fishermen have a good time at a reasonable distance from shore. But when the commercial fishermen use FADs, they cause a lot of damage to the fish populations — especially sailfish and dorado — from overfishing.”

WHY IT’S SPECIAL

Xta-Sea owner Chamorro summarized his thoughts about sport fishing in Nicaragua by saying, “I believe Nicaragua is the best-kept secret in fishing right now. There are three reasons why it’s such an amazing destination. The first is that it’s completely virgin — Nicaragua is truly nature’s garden. Second, it’s the safest country in Latin America. And the third is that there’s a very wide range of accommodations. Whether you want to stay on the beach in a bungalow or a five-star resort like Mukul, there’s really something for everyone in Nicaragua.” He says that in 35 years of fishing, he’s barely scratched the surface in exploring these waters. “We have one of the longest coastlines in Central America here, and yet, there are very few boats fishing it,” he says. “It really is an incredible place!” 🍷



NEW JERSEY'S COOLEST FISHING CLUB?

THE HISTORIC BEACH HAVEN MARLIN AND TUNA CLUB
STILL THRIVES AFTER 65 YEARS

By KARL ANDERSON

IN FALL 2012, Superstorm Sandy swept up the entire East Coast with gale winds, flood tides and monstrous seas, and the predictions of a devastating landing in New Jersey came true. Once the storm made its left turn into the barrier islands of uninhabited Little Beach and Holgate on the south end of Long Beach Island, its northern quadrant packed a crushing blow to the lower two-thirds of LBI. It was especially brutal to Holgate and my hometown of Beach Haven. Along with all the destruction to homes, marinas and boats, one of the oldest fishing clubs on the coast suffered a total loss to its facility, which was built in 1962.

A group of fishermen who had long fished the area founded the Beach Haven Marlin and Tuna Club in 1949 after they recognized the need and benefit of forming a club. Since the mid-1800s, Beach Haven was well-known for its prolific inshore bay fishing for weakfish, fluke, stripers and croakers. The Philadelphia and New York papers regularly documented this excellent fishing in the summers as well as the considerable water fowling in the winters.

New Jersey's Beach Haven Marlin and Tuna Club began its White Marlin Invitational Tournament in 1970. That event has become one of the longest-running tournaments in existence targeting white marlin; it began four years before the larger White Marlin Open.



PAT FORD



A Charter Fleet Forms

As the summer homes and cottages of the Philadelphia gentry sprang up, the Beach Haven Yacht Club, founded in 1882 by a group of captains, began hosting what was to become the largest charter fleet on the East Coast, with well over 40 boats in service at its peak in the decades leading up to World War II. These boats were owned by some of the best skippers on the coast, several of whom will be the first to migrate south to Florida for the winter to pursue sailfish and marlin.

Prior to the founding of the BHMT in 1916, Abercrombie & Fitch hired a fellow named William Baxter to head up the tackle department for them. While in that position, as a promotion to sell more tackle and promote the sport, he organized the founding of the Beach Haven Tuna Club through a merger with the Beach Haven Anglers Club and the New Jersey Fishing Club. This newly formed club was the first member club of the then-fledgling International Game Fish Association.

Celebrity Members

Membership was by invitation only, and the list of members who regularly fished Beach Haven included angling greats and well-known artists of the day, such as Kip Farrington, Francis Low, Zane Grey, Michael Lerner, Ernest Hemingway, Van Campen Heilner, Philip Wylie, Harlan Major, Lynn Bogue Hunt, George Le Boutelier, William Mackey and Carl Fisher, who later became known for extensive real estate developments in Florida and Montauk, New York. He also served as the chairman of the board of Ashaway Line, as well as other prominent manufacturers.

By 1912, some of the skippers had power vessels and began fishing offshore, including a young pioneering captain named Tom Jones, aboard *Miraamy*. He brought the first bluefin tuna to the dock around 1915; by 1922,



“Baxter developed and patented the first shoulder harness. He also developed the fish flags we know today, which announce a day’s catch.”

he had developed trolling techniques to target with regularity the prolific schools of tuna he found at places like the Barnegat Ridge, with white marlin being an “accidental catch.” Captains Rudy Steinhäuser of *Blackjack*, and Max Schoenberg, with sons Hennie and Herb,

on their boats *Spearmaiden*, *Henrietta* and *Cadet*, also pioneered the offshore grounds and traveled to West Palm Beach and Stuart, Florida, in the winters to charter there.

During this time, fishing with the skilled Beach Haven skippers, Baxter developed and patented the first shoulder harness. He also developed the fish flags we know today, which announce a day’s catch, and he imported

In 1940, the Beach Haven Tuna Club became the first club member of the IGFA, which had been created one year earlier.



COURTESY CAPT. GENE HAWN COLLECTION (ABOVE), KARL ANDERSON (OPPOSITE TOP), COURTESY WALTER JOHNSON III COLLECTION (OPPOSITE BOTTOM)



Left: L-R, Top: Capt. Gene Hawn, Dick Ryon, Mark Yoder, Tom Newbern. Kneeling: Capt. Charlie Beer, Joe Wayes; Above: L-R Paul Dartanian, Kris Anderson, Barry Baxter, Dick Ryon, Capt. Bill McMurray. Below: Walter Johnson Jr. with a nice white marlin catch.



the first Japanese feather to the tuna fleet of Beach Haven. He persuaded well-known celebrities to sample the area's great fishing, including Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig; on one such trip, they were held to the dock with a hard nor'easter, so they "... imbibed heavily of spirituous liquors, and the Babe was given an egg shampoo on the yacht club dock."

Baxter held the annual club banquet at swank hotels of the day in New York City, including the Hotel New Yorker and St. Regis. With World War II basically shutting down sport fishing off the coast, the Beach Haven Tuna Club became dormant during the war and it was totally inactive in 1950. The seeds for the Beach Haven Marlin and Tuna Club were sewn.

The First Blue

Prior to the war, in summer 1938, the charter fleet had been experiencing good catches with tuna, some mako sharks, and white marlin with some frequency. Then

Capt. Watson "Kinky" Pharo, aboard his charter boat *Eleanor*, captured the first blue marlin off New Jersey on a Japanese feather, bringing the fish to gaff after an hourlong battle. The excitement for the charter skippers and the huge crowd who gathered put another spotlight on Beach Haven as a fishing hot spot. Then the war came, and things changed.

When the war ended, people once again began fishing. In 1949, a group of 27 fishermen drafted a new charter for the Beach Haven Marlin and Tuna Club, holding meetings in the storied Acme Hotel and Bar on the bay at Dock Road in Beach Haven, site of the Ketch Restaurant today. The group included South Jersey legend H.T. "Piney" Parker of the boat *ABC*; Al Sturch, a prominent angler and member of the Atlantic City Tuna Club; then-commodore Robert Hutt; and Capt. William Howe of the charter boat *Augusta*, among others. The club flourished, and private boats

replaced the famed charter fleet of the Beach Haven Yacht Club. The club quickly built up an active membership with their annual inter-club fishing contest for local species known to frequent the area throughout the seasons.

There were five basic purposes of the club at the outset: To promote a closer relationship between various sport-fishermen; to further efforts to obtain outstanding publicity for Beach Haven and Long Beach Island; to provide a means for getting prizes together for deserving contenders; to encourage participation in various tournaments and fishing contests; and, finally, to work for and uphold fishing conservation and to promote a high degree of sportsmanship among saltwater anglers.

A Home of Their Own

By the end of the 1950s, the club meetings at the bar tended to get a bit spirited; the need for a house of their own at which to meet became a major drive for several members. In 1961, Dick Ryon, owner of the boat *Anthracite*, became commodore and formed a nonprofit corporation as a holding company, which issued bonds to raise the money to build the building on land donated by members Capt. William Howe and Jim Priestly, who both owned marinas in town.

Through the hard work of members and committeemen, the first clubhouse was completed in 1962 and became the focal point of club activities. With a large kitchen, an ample private bar and a large room for events, the facility was well-used. To make seating for the room, upscale varnished wooden chairs were sold as a fundraiser to members, and their boat name was painted on the backrest of the chair like a transom. It was always a sight to enter the room and read the names of the boats. Many of the



L-R: Members Karl Kotke, H.T. “Piney” Parker, and Forrest “Bud” Smith, a *Philadelphia Inquirer* photographer.

chairs got damaged by water in Sandy, and, unfortunately, those members who supported the club back in the day have lost that monument to their boat and their participation in the club.

By 1974, the BHMTTC Holding Company was in a position to write deeds and turn the property over to the Tuna Club with deed restrictions and the specificity of the original intent of the stockholders to keep the club a place for sportsmen and not a commercial enterprise.

Launching a New Tournament

In 1970, the club held its first White Marlin Invitational Tournament. Club member and captain Joe Bossard, who ran Bob Gaskill’s *Bee Dee*, was the moving force behind starting the event. With a

nice clubhouse, good fishing, excellent hospitality, good meals each night and camaraderie among participants, it soon became a popular event. The tournament flourished with visiting boats coming from up and down the coast to fish alongside the formidable fleet of club members. These members included Don Leek of the boatbuilding family on *Wild Duck*; Walt Johnson, a driving force in marinized diesel engines on *J&T*; Parker’s *ABC*; and Ryon’s *Anthracite*. Back then, the boats all followed a local boat down the bay; each morning, crowds gathered on the street ends to watch the parade of boats leaving, then went to the clubhouse to watch the weigh-in.

Today, like most tournaments, the White Marlin Invitational Tournament has a flat fee of “pots” for winnings, but in the original days of the tournament up

Club members erected a new clubhouse to replace the original, which was destroyed by Superstorm Sandy in 2012.



COURTESY BARRY PARKER COLLECTION (TOP); COURTESY BEACH HAVEN MARLIN AND TUNA CLUB (LEFT)

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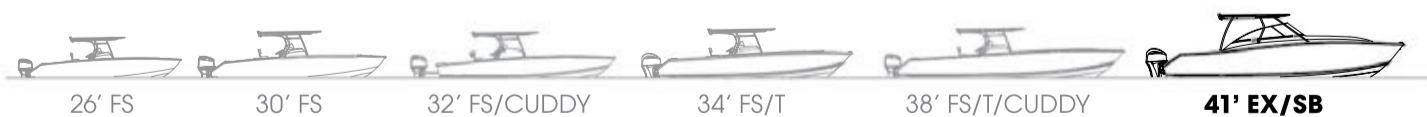
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Piney Parker's ABC at the old clubhouse. William Howe's marina with Dick Ryon's 43-foot Wheeler is in the background.

to the mid-80s, a true calcutta was held at a member's house to auction off each boat. This was one of the more social things lost in the drone of fishing for money in many of today's tournaments. The only tournament I know of that still has a real calcutta today is the big show down in Texas, Poco Bueno. The White Marlin Invitational Tournament is still fished today, and it's one of the oldest white marlin tournaments on the coast, predating Ocean City's mammoth White Marlin Open by four years.

As is the case with many clubs, membership changes; for a period in the '70s and '80s, the club had more social members than fishing members, but today, fishing participation is as high as ever. After Sandy, the original building had to be demolished, and the members rose to the occasion, building an incredible new three-story facility on the original property with a large expansive room to serve functions, a second-story bar, and outside decks overlooking the bay.

Inter-Club Competition

Along with the White Marlin Invitational Tournament, the club now hosts the Beach Haven LBI Cup Striper Invitational, which has become a staple in many angler's fall fishing schedule during the striper run. Inter-club events include the spring striper and bluefish tournament, the mako and tuna tournament, an inshore bay tournament, the first offshore tournament of the season, a men's, women's, intermediate and junior's tournament, the overnight offshore tournament, a fall striper tournament and a wreck tournament.

The annual fishing contest has been in place since the club's inception, recording catches throughout the year and awarding angler's achievements at the annual banquet for largest fish of the species.

One of the hallmarks of the club is their Junior Angler membership. Today, the club has more youth participation than ever, hosting a junior angler event and encouraging the participation of kids in the annual fishing contest. As a former junior member, I remember attending the awards dinners and receiving prizes for my catches, including rods, tackle boxes, lamps and a host of other things that kept my interest in fishing at a time when there were so many things to divert that attention.

There are many great and well-known fishing clubs, but few with such a clubhouse, a storied past and an active membership. For more than 65 years, the club has served the membership and played an active role in promoting fishing in the area. It has been supportive of many recreational fishing conservation issues, and it has hosted a long-standing white marlin event that has seen some of the sport's top professionals fish it over the years. Always a fixture on the coast, the Beach Haven Marlin and Tuna Club was founded and sustained by avid fishermen with a desire to grow the sport and share it among friends, and that same philosophy is still entrenched in today's membership. 🐟



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When trying to capture fish weighing in excess of 1,000 pounds, your terminal tackle needs to withstand incredible pressures, especially when using 130-pound line on unlimited rods.



BIG-GAME RIGGING THREE WAYS

PULLING ON A BIG ONE REQUIRES HEAVY TERMINAL TACKLE

BY DAVE FERRELL



PULLING ON A TRULY BIG FISH WITH HEAVY TACKLE SITS AT THE CORE OF ALL BIG-GAME FISHING. WE ALL GREW UP READING STORIES OF TITANIC MAN-VERSUS-FISH BATTLES LASTING FOR HOURS AND HOURS UNTIL ONE OF THE COMBATANTS FINALLY GIVES IN TO THE PRESSURE AND QUILTS. HISTORICALLY, THESE HEAVY-TACKLE SHOOTOUTS USUALLY RESULTED IN THE DEATH OF THE FISH, A BROKEN LINE OR NEAR DEATH FROM EXHAUSTION OF THE ANGLER AS WELL.

Those old-timers, however, had an excuse for fighting a 600-pound fish for hours at a time: Their line, tackle, fighting chairs and tactics couldn't withstand the drag pressures that taking a big fish quickly requires. Luckily for us, several decades of offshore fishing improved the tackle and tactics to the point where a good crew with a bit of knowledge stands a fighting chance against a great big fish — and it shouldn't take an inordinate amount of time to catch it, either. Some people say that speed kills. While that might be true when it comes to driving, when it comes to fishing, drag kills.

The first time I ever fought a fish from a fighting chair, it was a disaster. I was using 80-pound tackle on a 100-pound blue marlin in a chair that was never adjusted. I felt like someone had strapped me into a medieval torture device. My knees were up around my ears and the fish couldn't pull my ass off the seat, so I pretty much just slid back and forth and tried to wind whenever I could. It wasn't fun, and the chair didn't offer any advantage when used this way. All of that changed when I finally met Capt. Peter B. Wright and saw how he set up a fighting chair to match the angler's height and girth; with shorter anglers calling for a low, closer-in footrest, and with tall anglers getting the low and long adjustment. With the proper adjustments of the gimbal, chair legs, and harness links, pulling 70 to 90 pounds of drag with the straight-legged method becomes a breeze!

Anglers fishing from a properly adjusted fighting chair can exert over 90 pounds of drag without any distress or fatigue.

Of course, if you have an angler in the chair who can hold up to 90 pounds of drag on your 130-pound line, it becomes extremely important that your terminal tackle and line/leader system can also take that much pressure, and a bit more. Even though that macho ethic of overpowering a big fish still exists today, few anglers, or even big-game fishing teams for that matter, are well-schooled in the art of subduing big fish, either to the point of getting a tag or taking the fish in a tournament or for a world record. But before any of that tagging or boating occurs, your terminal tackle has to withstand the pressure of 130-pound gear, as well as the added pressure of an eager leader man on the wire. Here are four big-game rigs used by two captains known for their ability to catch the largest game fish that swim.

PULLING ON TUNA

Born in the Bahamas and raised in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Capt. Andy Moyes spent his youth fishing in some great bill-fish water — but that didn't curb his lust for travel and big fish. Moyes fished all over the world chasing marlin and sails, but it's his skill at catching giant bluefin on unlimited tackle that we turn to here. For the last five years running, Moyes has traveled to Nova Scotia to pull on bluefin tuna weighing between 800 and 1,000 pounds. While more and more sport fishermen are making their way up to Nova Scotia, this tuna fishery is still firmly attached to its commercial roots, so crews here get a lot of experience using — and breaking — tackle that tests well above 130-pound test, which is considered the upper limit when fishing by IGFA rules.

Since the bluefin here reach incredible sizes and can pull like a freight train, the really heavy application of drag needs to wait until after the fish makes its initial run. "We start our drag at around 25 pounds on the strike and let the fish pull off some line," says Moyes. "Once the fish starts to run out of oxygen and slows down, we push the drag up to anywhere from 50 to 100 pounds, depending on the size of the fish. We don't put any heavy drag on the fish until the mono top shot is on the reel."

Moyes' wind-on leader system doesn't use any knots and only one crimp; all connections are spliced or loop-to-loop. Even so, it's an incredibly tough leader system. "With our setup, we can use whatever it takes to overpower the fish. We usually don't experience any breaks with this system unless we've caught several fish on one leader or if something touches the leader in the water. The biggest problem we've had over the years has probably been the



MOYES



ILLUSTRATION: DAVE UNDERWOOD (OPPOSITE); PHOTOS: DAVE FERRELL (LEFT), © SCOTT KERRIGAN / AQUAPARAZZI.COM (OPPOSITE)



Your leader system's primary function is to withstand the extra pressure that comes when the mate grabs the leader at boat-side.

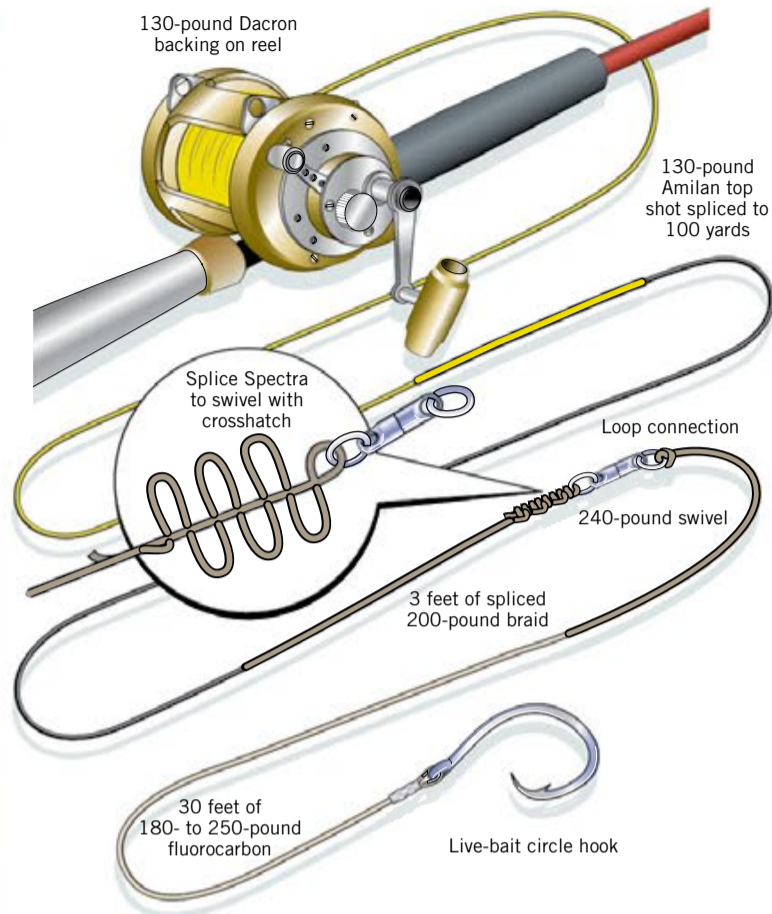
integrity of the Dacron itself in the backing.”

Since they are fishing in an average depth of 80 to 100 feet of water, they risk little chance of being spooled by a plunging dive, but that doesn't make it easy. “During the endgame, they can really pull. They are a giant tuna, so they can do what they want,” says Moyes. “When you hook a bluefin up there, they are like a 1,000-pound bonefish: They tear off across the top. You are better off fishing light drag at first to avoid tearing up your gear, and then once you get on top of them and they slow down, you can start putting it on them.”

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BLUEFIN WIND-ON



THE BLUEFIN WIND-ON

As mentioned before, Moyes uses a wind-on leader system with no knots. This creates a stealthy profile and also allows the mate to help the angler gain line once the wind-on enters the rod tip. The mate can grab the wind-on and pull up on the leader as the angler winds it on. By Canadian law, Moyes must use 180-pound line or better as his main line, but he still uses a 130-pound Amilan monofilament for his top shot. He uses 200-pound braid, Tuff XP, for backing when commercial fishing. When making IGFA-legal line and leader systems, Moyes starts with straight 130-pound Dacron as his main line, with the same 130-pound Amilan mono top shot. (See illustration, Bluefin Wind-on, above)

The system starts with the 130-pound Dacron backing on the reel. From there, Moyes splices a 100-yard section of 130-pound Amilan monofilament (see sidebar, Getting 130-pound Amilan, below) to the Dacron, pushing 10 feet of the Amilan up into the Dacron and then using a series of half hitches with waxed thread to secure and finish the splice.

At the end of the 100-yard top shot, Moyes splices a 6-foot section of 200-pound Spectra braid to the mono in order to make a loop to attach the swivel that starts the wind-on. He folds the 200-pound braid in half and splices 2 feet of one leg over the Amilan top shot. He





When you can safely use over 50-plus pounds of drag, capturing even the largest billfish comes down to a matter of minutes instead of hours.

then passes the end of the braid through one side of a 240-pound Spro swivel and starts splicing the braid back and forth through itself to create the loop. After going back and forth through the braid several times, he then splices the tag back up into the braid to complete the loop with the swivel attached. This small, yet strong swivel has an incredibly small profile that easily winds up through the guides on an unlimited rod.

On the other end of the swivel, Moyes uses another 6-foot section of 200-pound Spectra braid to attach the wind-on, only this time he's splicing the other end to a 30-foot section of 250-pound fluorocarbon leader. He uses the same back-and-forth pattern in the wind-on to make the loop before inserting the remainder of the braid back into itself. The hook end couldn't be simpler: Moyes crimps on an 11/0 Gamakatsu heavy-duty live-bait circle hook tight to the leader without any chafing tube. With no double lines or knots, and only one crimp, this leader system can withstand the incredible pulling power of a full-grown bluefin tuna and still provide a streamlined leader system that winds on to the reel.

BLACK MARLIN: BLUE WATER BRUTES

While blue marlin usually get the edge when it comes to speed, black marlin get the edge when considering

size and ability to pull. Blues do get bigger overall, but it seems that many more blacks reach that magical 1,000-pound mark than blues. To catch these hard-pulling titans, the boys in Australia — who see more granders than any other fishermen on the planet — have come up with some incredibly tough, yet surprisingly simple leader systems.

Capt. Bo Jenyns, a longtime Aussie captain, mate and Marlin U instructor, honed his skills as a young man fishing on his father's charter boats. He started his freelancing career fishing with some of the very best heavy-tackle captains on the Great Barrier Reef and continuing on to places like Madeira and Ghana, chasing giant blue ones. As one of the most sought-after big-fish wiremen in the business, a lot of what Jenyns considers good leader material is guided by his time spent handling big fish on the wire.



JENYNS

Since most crews in Australia pull one skipping bait on the surface, usually a large tuna or mackerel, and one swimming bait on the wire, we asked Jenyns to show us the pros and cons of each rig. They are very similar in construction with the exception of the .040 stainless wire in the swimming rig. But as Jenyns explains, wire isn't always your best option with a swimming rig, either.

SWIMBAIT RIG

Jenyns says that most crews on the Great Barrier Reef use 130-pound Amilan if they are using mono as their main line; if not, then they are pulling 130-pound Dacron. Since they are very cognizant of world-record opportunities, they take great pains to make sure all of the lengths of each component are IGFA legal. (The combined length of the double line and leader shall not exceed 40 feet in line classes over 20 pound.)

At one time, most crews used .040 diameter stainless wire for all of their leaders, which gave birth to the term "wiring" to describe when a mate grabbed the leader. While a lot of crews still use the wire when rigging their swimbaits in Australia, Jenyns prefers to use heavy mono for several reasons. "I've had a couple of the wire leaders break on big fish," he says. "I'd rather have the mono. In the old days, mono wasn't that good; you could chafe them off. Now, since they can make much tougher mono, I feel comfortable using the mono on my swimbaits as well."

Jenyns' experience in handling both materials with big fish next to the boat also tends to shade his views on what's best. "Trying to deal with 29 feet of wire on the deck can be a problem. You have to have a good number two crew to back you up who can cover your back. He's got to watch where the leader goes, how it's laying, to help keep you out of trouble. Mono just seems to be more forgiving," says Jenyns.

Jenyns doesn't like wind-ons for his swimbaits, either. "By the time you have those 200-pound Dacron splices, a heavy wind-on leader section, big swivel, crimp, crimp condom on over the crimp, it just seems to be a lot of stuff on the line," he says. "I feel that all that stuff creates drag that can lift the bait up higher

in the water. And I want my swimbait to stay down. Besides, I think the straight mono just looks better.”

There are, however, still a lot of crews who prefer to use the wire on the their swimbaits because they do swim a little better. Wire also breaks at a very consistent point and it doesn’t stretch at all, allowing you to get a lot closer to a full 30 feet of leader. Here’s how Jenyns builds the swimming rig on wire. (See illustration, Wire Rig, below)

Jenyns also prefers to use 130-pound Amilan for his main line because it is pretested to break where it’s supposed to per IGFA regulations. To start, Jenyns ties a 6- to 8-foot double line with a Bimini twist. (He thinks the Australian braid is too time-consuming.) At the end of the double line, he ties on a 200-pound heavy-duty ball-bearing snap swivel. He likes a thick snap that is very stiff.

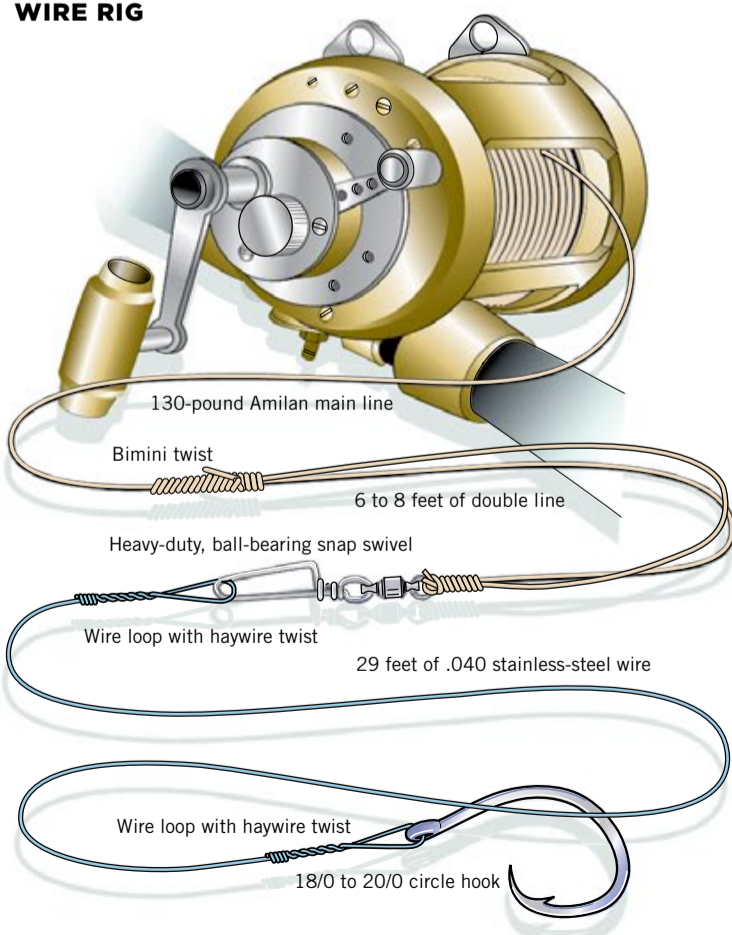
To make the leader, he takes a 30-foot section of .040 wire and puts a loop in one end using a haywire twist and a Bimini wrap. You might want to use a pair of pliers if you don’t twist a lot of .040 wire! At the other end, he passes the wire through an 18/0 circle hook to match the size of the swimming scad. The scads are weighted internally and have a loop of Dacron sticking out of the top of their head that allows you to attach the hook via a loop knot. This setup is a simple, yet strong leader system with minimal drag to keep your dead, or even live bait, deep.

MONO SKIP

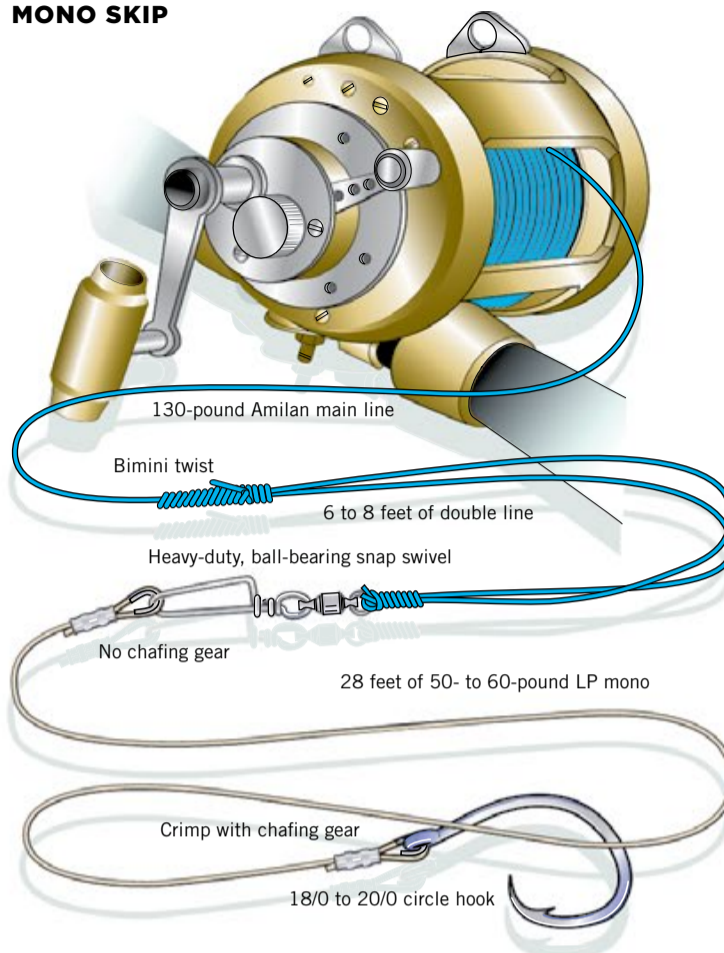
In Australia, they pull monstrous dead baits that most anglers in the States would love to catch on rod and reel. These big baits attract some enormous takers, and here’s how Jenyns keeps them on the leader. (See illustration, Mono Skip, at right.)

The rig starts with the same 6 to 8 feet of double

WIRE RIG



MONO SKIP




line, secured with a Bimini twist. (To see a heavy-tackle Bimini tied from start to finish on the deck of a game boat in Australia, visit marlinmag.com/heavy-bimini.) From there, he ties on the same 200-pound, heavy-duty ball-bearing snap.

To make the main section of mono leader, Jenyns prefers to use 28 feet of either 550- or 650-pound Lindgren-Pitman mono. (You cut it down to 28 feet to account for any stretch in the mono, again to make sure you are world-record compliant.) It’s hard enough to resist the abrasion of a black marlin’s bill, but not so stiff as to be unmanageable when the fish is on the leader. A simple crimped loop at the top section goes in the snap, while a crimp and chafe tube on the bottom secures the hook. You need the chafe tubing on the hook end when you crimp on your 18/0 to 20/0 circle hook, depending on the size of the bait.

A lot of crews are turning to wind-on leaders these days because of their durability, cost savings over the long haul, and ability to store lures with very short trace leaders. But they aren’t the best bet for every application, says Jenyns. “With just a straight piece of mono, you can get rid of a fish faster once it is caught. With a wind-on, you have to wait until you have the entire wind-on leader up out of the water and on the reel so you can cut under the swivel to let the fish go. You can’t just cut it off anywhere or you’ll lose all that splice work and gear. A lot of guys on the Reef have switched back to straight mono from wind-ons for just this reason. If you have a charter that’s worn completely out, or it’s a big fish that’s been on for a while and you know it’s close to chafing through the leader, you don’t want to have to get the entire leader in the boat before you can cut the fish off. You need to get rid of the fish and you don’t want to lose all that money and time spent on the wind-on.”

“WITH JUST A STRAIGHT PIECE OF MONO, YOU CAN GET RID OF A FISH FASTER ONCE IT IS CAUGHT. WITH A WIND-ON, YOU HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL YOU HAVE THE ENTIRE WIND-ON LEADER UP OUT OF THE WATER AND ON THE REEL SO YOU CAN CUT UNDER THE SWIVEL TO LET THE FISH GO.”

— Capt. Bo Jenyns



Lizard Island sits 155 miles north of Cairns off the coast of Australia. It has produced many huge black marlin, mostly due to its proximity to the famed Ribbon Reefs.

GRANDER GROUNDZ

AUSTRALIA'S LIZARD ISLAND MIGHT BE THE WORLD'S TOP SPOT TO TARGET HUGE BLACK MARLIN
STORY AND PHOTOS BY JOHN ASHLEY



ERO

SITUATED 155 MILES NORTH OF CAIRNS, AUSTRALIA, THE MAGNIFICENT LIZARD ISLAND HAS BECOME FAMOUS FOR THREE MAJOR ATTRACTIONS: ONE OF THE WORLD'S BEST, SECLUDED FIVE-STAR RESORTS; FABULOUS REEF DIVING; AND, CERTAINLY, THE WORLD'S BEST BLACK MARLIN FISHERY. FOR MANY YEARS NOW, LIZARD ISLAND HAS BEEN THE BASE FOR BIG-GAME ANGLERS CHALLENGING GIANT BLACK MARLIN ALONG THE GREAT BARRIER REEF. FROM LIZARD, IT'S ONLY A SHORT RUN OUT TO THE FAMOUS RIBBON REEFS, WHERE HUNDREDS OF GRANDERS HAVE BEEN CAUGHT AND RELEASED OVER THE YEARS. EVERY SPRING, THE PROLIFIC CORAL SEA EXPERIENCES A HUGE AGGREGATION OF ALL KINDS OF GAME FISH, INCLUDING BLACK MARLIN VARYING IN SIZE FROM TIDDLER HUNDRED-POUNDERS TO HALF-TON MONSTERS.

Back in the late '60s, when the first marlin boats from Cairns started venturing up the Great Barrier Reef to Lizard Island, the place was totally uninhabited. In 1970, the Queensland government built an airstrip on the island and a few years later set up a scientific marine research station. Work on a small, boutique resort also began in the mid-70s, and while the builders had their construction equipment on the island, they were asked by one of the Cairns captains to build a much-needed gantry to weigh their record-breaking giant black marlin.

BUILDING A WEIGH STATION

This request was made by none other than legendary Captain Peter Bristow, and he met with a guy by the name of John Wilson, head of the company building the resort. Wilson put Bristow in touch with their architect, and between them, they drew up a rough plan for the gantry in a bar at the Brisbane Airport. Bristow suggested telegraph poles would be perfect because they would be long enough and strong enough to hold a 17-foot-long

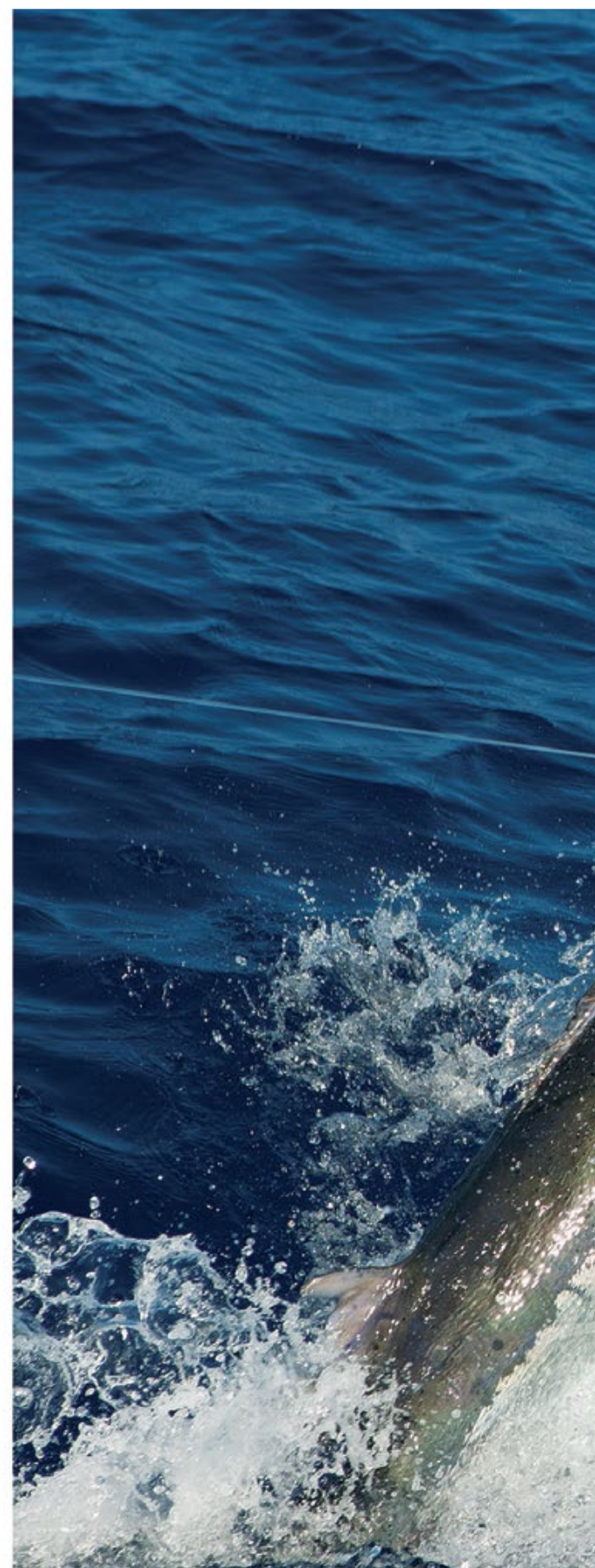
marlin. The construction was completed in time for the 1979 heavy-tackle season, and it was ideally built on the beach close to the lagoon waters where the game boats could gain close access.

I'll never forget my first trip there in the late '70s. That trip began my obsession with heavy-tackle angling. Back then, aboard the old 15-knot boat *Avalon*, it seemed a long trip from Cairns compared to today. By the time we arrived, it was quite late in the evening. The abundance of fish in the lagoon was unbelievable, and it was very easy to catch some of the best eating reef fish for dinner before the resident 600-pound cod and giant trevally moved in. They stole everything we hooked and destroyed all our light tackle. (This was prior to Lizard being designated as a Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.)

FISHING NUMBER 10

The next morning, we ran to the edge of the Great Barrier Reef, where we fished the openings between Yonge and No Name reefs for marlin baits. It only took half an hour to fill the icebox with good-size mackerel, tuna and rainbow runners. The famous Number 10 Ribbon Reef, one of 10 magnificent sections of reef running to the south of Lizard, stretched out right in front of us. I'd heard so much about this particular reef. Seeing its beauty and immense size for the first time seemed overwhelming. Number 10 sprawls completely unbroken for over 20 miles. Trolling

Capt. Peter Bristow and John Wilson built the gantry on Lizard Island's beach, where many huge blacks were weighed. Fishermen tore down the station later when catch-and-release fishing caught on.



down its eastern edge, there were times when we'd be in 100 fathoms, yet still in earshot of the rumbling Pacific swells breaking on the glistening coral. I was told these giant black marlin often feed right up in the shallows, and when we hooked our first 600-pounder, we could actually see the bottom. It was mind-blowing stuff!

Even more astonishing, though, was what happened an hour later when a school of 15- to 20-pound yellowfin tuna busted up all around us. The bait rod was quickly deployed, and an instant hookup produced the perfect-size live bait. We quickly bridle-rigged the tuna and ran it back 100 yards before wrapping a heavy

GETTING THERE

These days, many international carriers fly direct into Cairns Airport, or you can fly into the east coast's two largest cities of Brisbane or Sydney. From Sydney, it's a 2½-hour flight to Cairns or two hours from Brisbane with Qantas, Jetstar or Virgin Australia airlines. From Cairns, it's a 55-minute flight to Lizard Island with East Air. For info or bookings, visit its website at eastair.net.au or email general@eastair.net.au

rubber band around the 130-pound Dacron and clipping it in the outrigger peg. We didn't even get a chance to hoist the line up the rigger when the rubber band stretched to the limit and snapped. The tuna bait had disappeared down the throat of a very large fish.

For all of us inexperienced anglers

on the deck, the bite was absolutely frightening, and Bristow screamed out, "She looks a definite grander!" The hole in the ocean where she ate the bait looked like a small car had been dropped in the water, and I just stood there gobsmacked. When the big mother came leaping 20 feet out of the water, I





The fleet heads out for the day (above) in the Lizard Island Game Fishing Club Black Marlin Classic. This popular, heavy-tackle only (right) event features a prestigious award for tagging and releasing a grander.

couldn't believe her size; that first jump is still etched in my brain, even though it was 39 years ago. We broke wire on that beast after an hourlong fight, but it's that monster that has kept me going back to the Great Barrier Reef and Lizard Island every season since.

THE LIZARD ISLAND CLUB

By the early '80s, a number of anglers and boat captains had discussed the prospect of starting a game-fishing club on the island because of its unique location. Longtime visitor to the island and avid big-game angler Alan Turnbull said to me once, "There's nothing on earth like Lizard Island, and if ever there was a place to have a great fishing club, it would be here." And he was dead right. Along with Turnbull, Bob Lowe, Johnno Johnson, John O'Brien and Peter Goadby founded the Lizard Island Game Fishing Club in spring 1985.

When the news broke about the club, many anglers from here and overseas



were thrilled to be part of it, and in '86, the first heavy-tackle Black Marlin Classic Tournament was held. This inaugural event was won by none other than Bristow on *Avalon*, and it was quickly discovered by many competitors that the name "Black Marlin Classic" said it all. No other marlin tournament in the world could boast the sheer number

of giants caught off Lizard. It didn't just happen way back then, either; it's been going on now for 28 years.

HEAVY TACKLE ONLY

The Lizard Classic became a standout for heavy-tackle anglers the world over. Because of the size of the marlin experienced, the 130-pound-tackle-only rule they instituted all those years ago continues today. In the early days of the Classic, anglers who captured their biggest-ever black were able to bring the beast back to the island to be weighed. In 2001, the biggest black ever weighed in the history of the Classic was presented to the weighmaster. The monster stretched the certified scales to 1,278 pounds. Back in those days, there was a trophy for the heaviest marlin

THE CLUB

Anyone wishing to join the Lizard Island Game Fishing Club or fish the Black Marlin Classic should check out its website — lizardislandgfc.asn.au — or email Lowe: boblowe@lizardislandgfc.asn.au.

Contacts for charter boats can be found through the Cairns Professional Game Fishing Association website — cpgfa.asn.au — or email — info@cpgfa.asn.au — or by the charter boat directory on the Black Marlin Blog at blackmarlinblog.com.au.

The 2015 LIGFC Black Marlin Classic will be held Oct. 17-23.



captured in the tournament.

Around the turn of the century, though, many changes unfolded in our game-fishing world, and the perception of killing any large game fish started to be frowned upon. Dwindling fish stocks became regular news; the introduction of circle hooks to try to protect these fish even further became popular, and it was mandatory in some cases. It soon became the norm to release any large game fish, preferably with a tag in it. In the case of billfish, better tags and applicators were developed and more and more satellite tags were introduced into the Classic to track these giant marlin as well.

GOING CATCH-AND-RELEASE

In 2005, the Club's long-serving president, Bob Lowe, decided it was time to stop killing these large marlin, even though there had been a minimum weight of 450 kilograms (993 pounds) in place for many years. On top of this, there was always a general understanding among the captains that if a grander-plus was weighed early in the tournament, no marlin estimated under that weight would be killed. The old gantry was eventually torn down as a respect for the tag-and-release, no-kill policy.

To replace the tournament's heaviest marlin trophy, the committee introduced a prestigious award for those anglers who tagged and released a grander during the Classic. The introduction of the Grander T&R Club was well-received by the members, and 38 anglers have qualified since it began in 2005. The rules to join this elite club were drawn up to make it very precise, and a

signed affidavit, along with a clear and accurate photograph of the grander before release, had to be presented to the committee for consideration.

The 2014 Classic was another huge success, even though the club had to temporarily vacate the island's facilities and stage the briefing and presentation functions on the mainland at nearby Cooktown. A fierce category-four cyclone had blasted a destructive path right across the island during the earlier summer months, destroying most of the resort, as well as damaging the famous barn where all the club's functions are held. The move actually made quite a spectacle for this sleepy little country town, and all the locals embraced the tournament held there. The Cooktown dock and the banks of

LIZARD ISLAND GFC BLACK MARLIN CLASSIC RESULTS

CHAMPION BOAT

***Top Shot*, skippered by Capt. Ross Finlayson and crewmen Andy Dow and Jye Claydon with 14 tags**

RUNNER-UP CHAMPION BOAT

***Little Audrey*, skippered by Capt. Daniel Carlson with eight tags**

CHAMPION ANGLER

***Naoto Aoyagi*, fishing on *Top Shot* with 14 tags**

CHAMPION LADY ANGLER

***Sharon Pouter*, fishing on *Think Big* with five tags**

the Endeavour River were lined with hundreds of local and visiting spectators to witness the start of the Classic with a brilliant sail-past from all of the competing vessels.

ANOTHER EPIC TOURNAMENT

The run from Cooktown to the middle of the Ribbon Reefs takes about an hour or so, and it wasn't long before the radios were crackling with the first hookups. Last year's winner, Capt. Ross Finlayson on *Top Shot*, was on a mission, but the first big fish he hooked unfortunately jumped off. The first grander to be released came from Capt. Luke Fallen on *Kekoa*, which turned out to be one of five monsters over the magic mark to be taken during the tournament. As the days slipped by, Finlayson really got in the hunt and ended up tagging 14 blacks to take out the Classic for the third year in a row, an amazing achievement.



The overall results of this seven-day tournament were, as per usual, spectacular to say the least, with 126 black marlin tagged and released. Out of these, 30 were big mamas over 800 pounds. In recent years, the Classic has been part of the IGFA Great Marlin Race, and all 26 vessels were armed with satellite tags. These sophisticated tags, worth around \$5,000 each, were donated by the Bertarelli Foundation and Stanford University, and all of them were deployed into large black marlin either during or just after the tournament. These tags will certainly yield some important information in the months to come. 🌐



IN THE WORLD OF MARINE ELECTRONICS, change comes rapidly and this represents good news for offshore captains and anglers. Navigation, fish finding, communication and collision avoidance have never been easier as the electronics available to us continually improve. Technology continues to advance at an amazing pace, and of all the new developments for 2015, here are some of the most powerful advances.



TECHNOLOGY MARCHES ON

**The More Things
Change, the Faster
They Change**

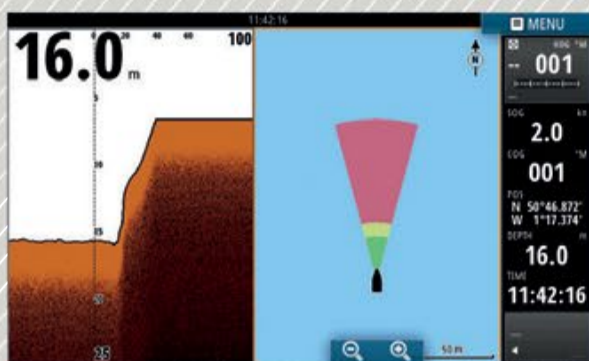
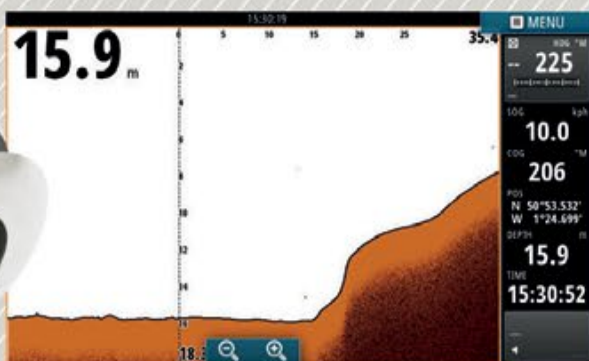
BY RANDY VANCE



The ocean gets smaller as navigation suites get more sophisticated. And this trend will continue, enhancing safety, fish finding and navigation.



A



[A] SIMRAD FORWARDSCAN

It was only a matter of time before recreational anglers turned their sonar transducer forward, scanning the water ahead to paint fish, obstacles or increasingly shallow waters. Just one more tool in the trick bag of a safe navigator, forward-scanning sonar will eventually find its way to the helm of all boats but particularly those who ply shifting shoals and inlets. Hazardous shallows are identified early, giving skippers ample opportunity to adjust course.

[B] DIGIMED

When the unthinkable happens and you're 100 miles from emergency assistance, DigiMed gives nearly immediate access to medical help in the lowest bandwidth satellite coverage. The system can be programmed to link to the user's own health care provider or to DigiDoc medical providers. Three DigiMed kits are available and all provide direct face-to-face contact with medical practitioners, giving them the ability to guide essential health care. DigiMed communications systems have saved lives and limbs when timely evacuation was impossible.

[C] DELORME INREACH AND ROFFS

DeLorme's device is one of the newer GPS-based satellite communicators that allow two-way messaging, a reliable locator for emergency response, and now Roffs sea temp data. "Our clients send us a satellite text we receive via email," said Mitch Roffer. "When we receive it, we can respond with updated coordinates." The two-way communication enables Roffs to update their information in real time as well.

[D] FURUNO NAVNET TZTOUCH2

Furuno has simplified the user experience by refining the multifunction-display interface to make it even more intuitive. RezBoost is Furuno's proprietary signal-processing protocol that produces fish targets and images that are four to eight times sharper on the same transducer, which is a new — and powerful — integrated dual-frequency model (50/200 kHz at 600 kW/1 kW, respectively). The result is better target separation and clearing structure images. Also new on board is an internal 56-channel GPS receiver, a truly integrated product.



B



C



D

[E] FUSION 650 AND 750 SERIES MARINE STEREOs

Fusion was one of the first to create a water-tight dock for MP3 devices and smartphones, and it has kept up with changes in connections and dimensions, offering extremely versatile systems. Bluetooth capable, these Fusions integrate Pandora's thumbs-up or down functions, and they can be operated via smartphones with an app. Waterproof to IPX5, they can take three minutes of a 6.3 mm water jet from 360 degrees without harm. If you're ready to upgrade, they fit the same footprint as the 500/600 models. They support four separate audio zones and a DVD dock that turns your NMEA 2000 multifunction display into a video center.

[F] STANDARD HORIZON GX1300 ECLIPSE

This Class-D DSC VHF has been re-engineered to IPX8 submersible waterproof standards, meaning that should your radio be required for a DSC distress call, it will continue transmitting until its antenna is submerged or its power source fails. When linked to your GPS via NMEA 0183 connections, it transmits your position and allows search-and-rescue operators to poll your position without verbal updates. It has a three-year warranty and an after-warranty flat repair rate of \$65.

[G] FLIR OCEAN SCOUT

FLIR has improved their handheld infrared-imaging device by incorporating a new high-resolution LCD screen, giving a clearer image at targets near and far, up to 600 meters. The Ocean Scout 240 has a 240-by-180 pixel image and features a 340-by-240 pixel screen, plus a video feed for a multifunction display.

[H] MCMURDO'S SMARTFIND S20

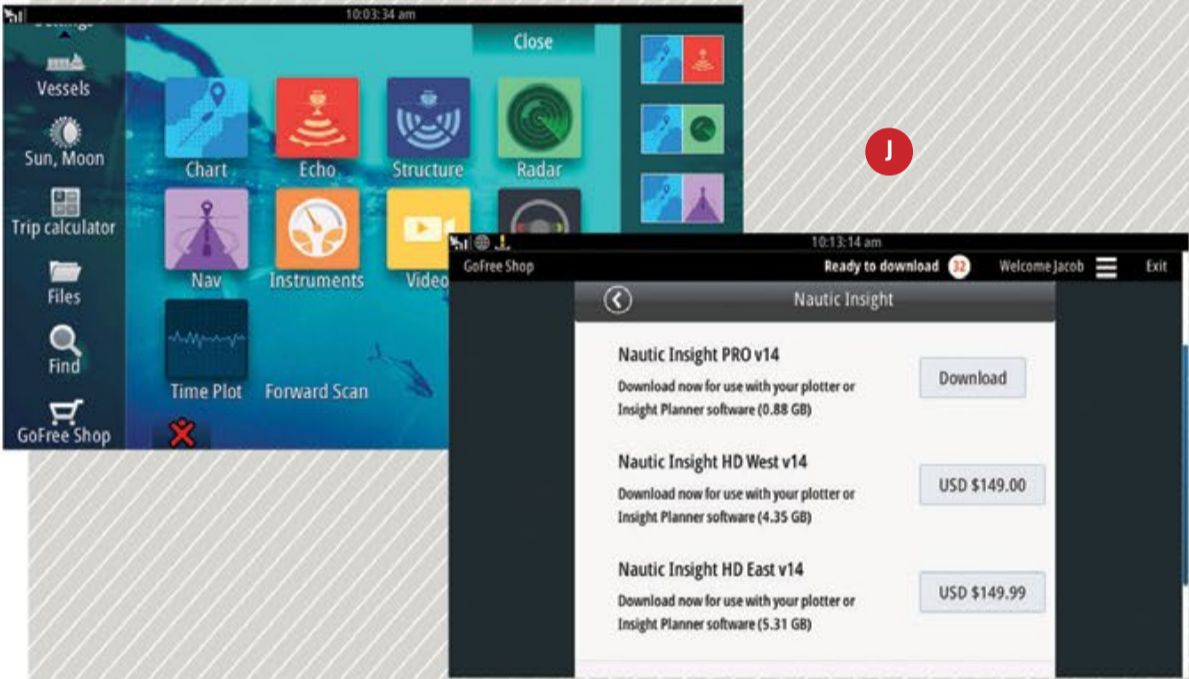
Here's an AIS-based personal-locator beacon that gives skippers the most precise contact point for a man overboard. Any in-range AIS device can pick up the signal, greatly increasing chances for rescue and often reducing rescue times. This aid to crew-overboard recovery grows more and more valuable as visibility decreases and separation from the victim increases. The unit can be attached to the oral inflation tube of an inflatable PFD; upon inflation, a lanyard is pulled to deploy the antenna and activate the beacon.





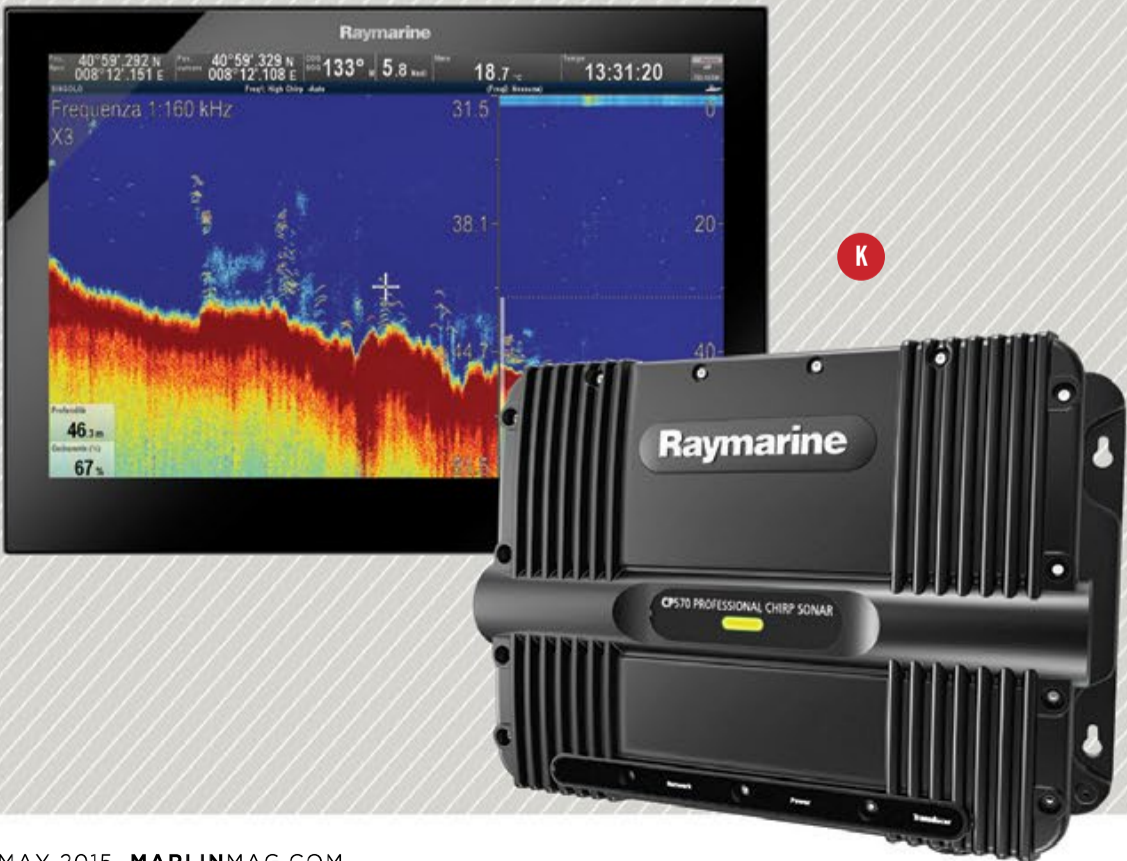
[I] ICOM M424G

The new M424G is a Class-D DSC radio with active noise-canceling technology proven to remove background noise in transmissions, clarifying communication. With an integrated GPS, the system gives a DSC-position fix without the hassle of making NMEA 0183 connections. Add all the same great features to a second station with an optional CommandMicIV with its own loudspeaker in the handset.



[J] GOFREE

Until now, a multifunction display's Wi-Fi capabilities were limited to connecting smartphones and tablets as remote monitors. Navico, makers of Simrad, Lowrance and B&G navigation gear, has just released the latest firmware update for its Wi-Fi capable NSS evo2 and NSO evo2 multifunction displays. With this update, your multifunction display logs into your local area network, automatically polling Navico's websites for firmware updates. But that's just a start. Now, with GoFree, Simrad users can browse the GoFree website for full charts and mapping updates. The firmware enables direct and automatic upload of recorded sonar records for developing into social maps as soon as your multifunction display comes into range of a friendly Wi-Fi signal. Your system and GoFree can now download crowd-sourced charts as well, offering incredible detail for your favorite fishing spots, never before available.



[K] RAYMARINE CHIRP CP570

A new family of CHIRP sonars from Raymarine spans the needs of both commercial and recreational offshore fishermen. The commercial grade CP570 has two sonar channels, 4 kW of power and improved automatic sensitivity for ultimate hands-off clarity. The CP470 boasts 2 kW of power and enhanced sensitivity for the competitive offshore angler.

[L] INTELLIAN GX60 AND GX100

For some, the luxury of offshore fishing comes only with the capability of broadband connectivity. Intellian continues to enhance its satellite constellation, building the speed and availability of communications and television coverage. The new GX60 (60 cm dome) and GX100 (1 meter dome) antennae and terminals are ready for today's satellite coverage but can also capitalize on expanded coverage when available. Simple kits enable GX expansion in minutes via firmware capabilities, avoiding expensive, time-consuming hardware reconfigurations.

[M] GARMIN PANOPTIX

Not content with simply looking forward, Garmin introduced Panoptix at the Miami International Boat Show. Its multidirectional transducer covers the hemisphere around the boat in real time, looking forward, back, left and right. This is an adaptation of offshore commercial sonar, designed at the moment for inshore anglers. We think it's only a matter of time before offshore versions are available. LiveVu gives a near-live video moving image of the water ahead, showing fish swimming in and out of range or letting an angler track his lure back to the water. RealVu 3D Down paints a real-time image of the bottom structure below. The detail is astonishing.

[N] WATER WOLF

Never has it been so easy to watch fish in your baits. For that matter, never has it been so easy to catch on video the actual bite. Wire Water Wolf into your rig between the Bimini and the leader, then wait for the action. Water Wolf shoots 720-pixel video and stores up to 60 minutes of it on an SD card. Watch the fish swim into your spread, bite, and the Water Wolf stays in perfect orientation to capture the fish's actions.

[O] KVH

A new Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) voice configuration by KVH promises better quality phone calls via satellite by giving priority to voice over data when broadband data is in heavy use. Undoubtedly most valuable for commercial vessels, the system will find favor with long-range pelagic skippers and mothership operations.







➤ HOT SHOTS

PHOTO BY SCOTT KERRIGAN / AQUAPAPARAZZI.COM

While fishing along Australia's Great Barrier Reef, photographer Scott Kerrigan grabbed a shot of a passing boat hooked to a big black marlin. "I remember some radio chatter that they did get a successful release of this fish," Kerrigan says. "No mention of the weight guesstimate." We'd guess "large."

➤ NEW PRODUCTS



◀ FIT FOR A KING

The Nautilus Silver King was built with bucket-mouth tarpon in mind, yet it's sure to tame the next pelagic predator that comes to your teaser. This dominator of all things that swim is the newest addition to the CCF-X2 lineup and is the lightest 5-inch reel on the market. Retrieving 14 inches of line per turn, the Silver King is the weapon of choice for fast running fish whether you're chasing your next record or putting up numbers. nautilusreels.com



⬇ CAN YOU SEE THE FISH?

Pelagic Polarized's new XP 700 lens system filters both UV rays and blue light to preserve true color perception and reduce vision fatigue by relaxing eye muscles. The industry's first to offer melanin technology infused in all of its lenses, it serves as a natural defense to protect skin against the sun. Melanin cuts glare and heightens contrast naturally to make the difference for long days on the water where it counts the most. The Carbonite-16 frame creates a tough, yet lightweight and comfortable fit for perfectly balanced performance and style on land or at sea. pelagicgear.com



⬆ FOLLOW THE GLOW

Taking dredge fishing to a new level, Squidnation's new Glow Dredge Head Skullz mimic the natural luminescence of squid and baitfish at night when under attack. Charged by any strong light source for 30 minutes, the Glow Dredge Head Skullz provide hours of glow-fishing time, and they will prove to be ideal during the magic hours before dawn and after dusk to draw the attention of tuna and billfish to your dredge. squidnation.com

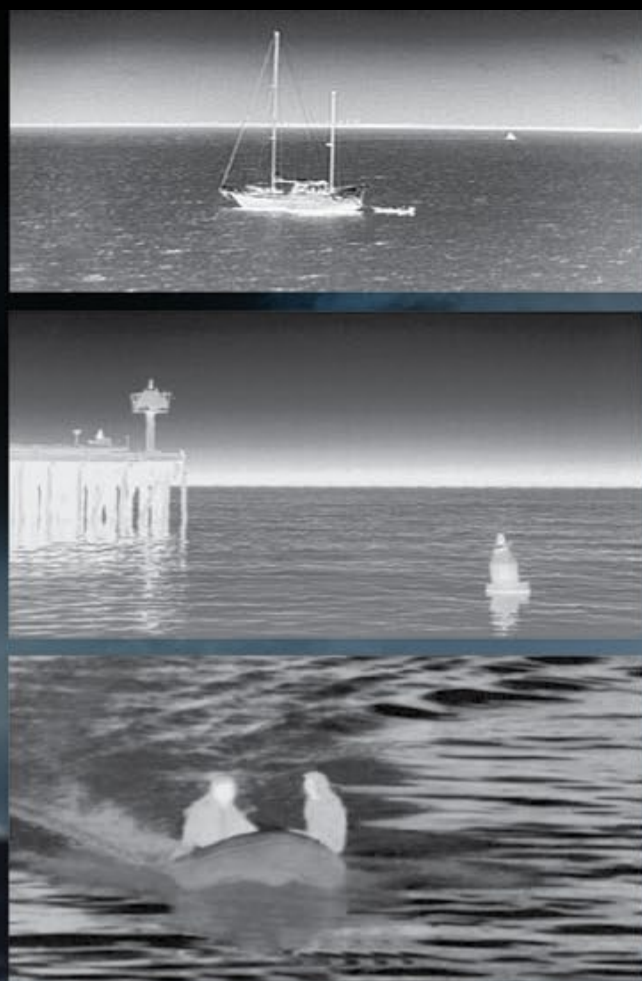


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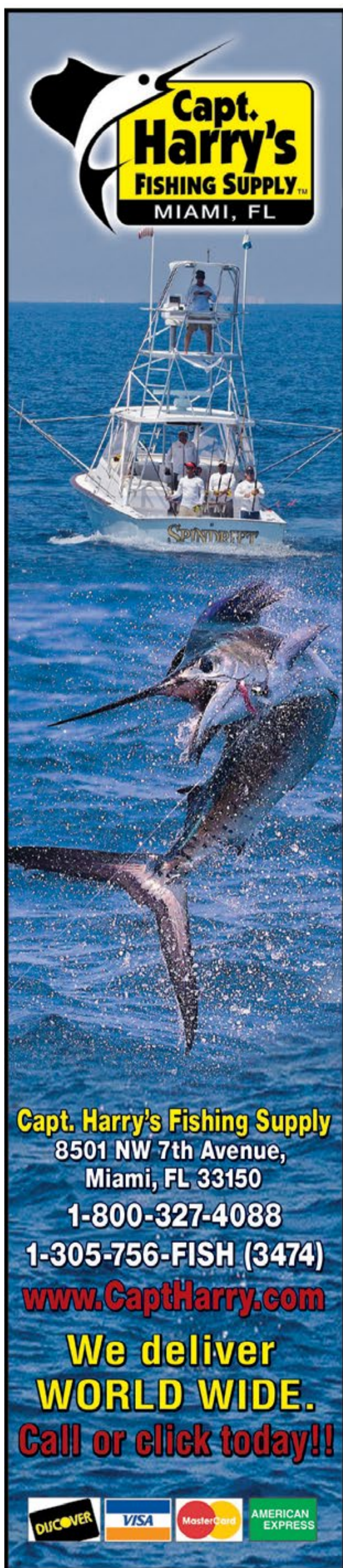
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➤ NEW PRODUCTS

➤ IT'S THE ULTIMATE

Based on Mojo's best-selling Wireman technical fishing shirt, the new Ultimate Guide ¼ zip performance shirt adds new features to an already solid shirt. Constructed with ComfortWeave fabric for stain resistance and moisture wicking, the shirt also features a UPF rating greater than 50. The addition of a higher collar and front zipper aid in protecting the back of the neck during long days on the water, and vented side panels keep you cool even on the hottest days. mojo-gear.com



➤ REACH FOR A NEW VIEW

Extend the capabilities of your digital video camera by getting closer to the action and capturing unique angles for new perspectives. The four-stage telescoping body makes GoPole's Reach compact yet portable at only 14 inches when collapsed, ideal for traveling. The integrated twist and lock components allow the Reach to extend up to 40 inches so you can grab underwater footage of your next billfish release or shoot from beyond the transom to capture the battle between your buddy and his catch. gopole.com

➤ REMOVE LINE WITH EASE

Bullbuster's new Line Stripper offers a simple yet thoughtful design to help remove line from fishing reels. Eliminate the need to manually pull line by hand or use other improvised tools to do the tedious task. Simply connect the Line Strippers to any drill, then wedge the line between the two pieces and let the drill do the rest. When finished, loosen the wing nut on the Line Strippers and separate one side to remove the neatly coiled fishing line. bullbuster.net



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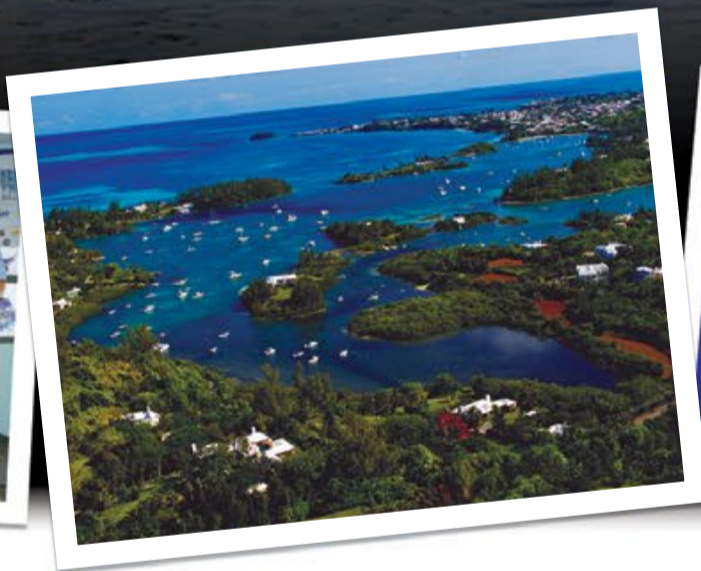


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BERMUDA Even the name conjures up visions of warm tropical seas, friendly island people and lost pirate treasures. One treasure that Bermuda has nurtured and shared with the rest of the world, however, is a dynamic, big-game fishery that ranks among the world's best. Grander blue marlin shadow enormous numbers of white marlin, yellowfin tuna and wahoo that thrive in the warm nutrient rich waters that pass around this oasis in the vast oceanic plains.

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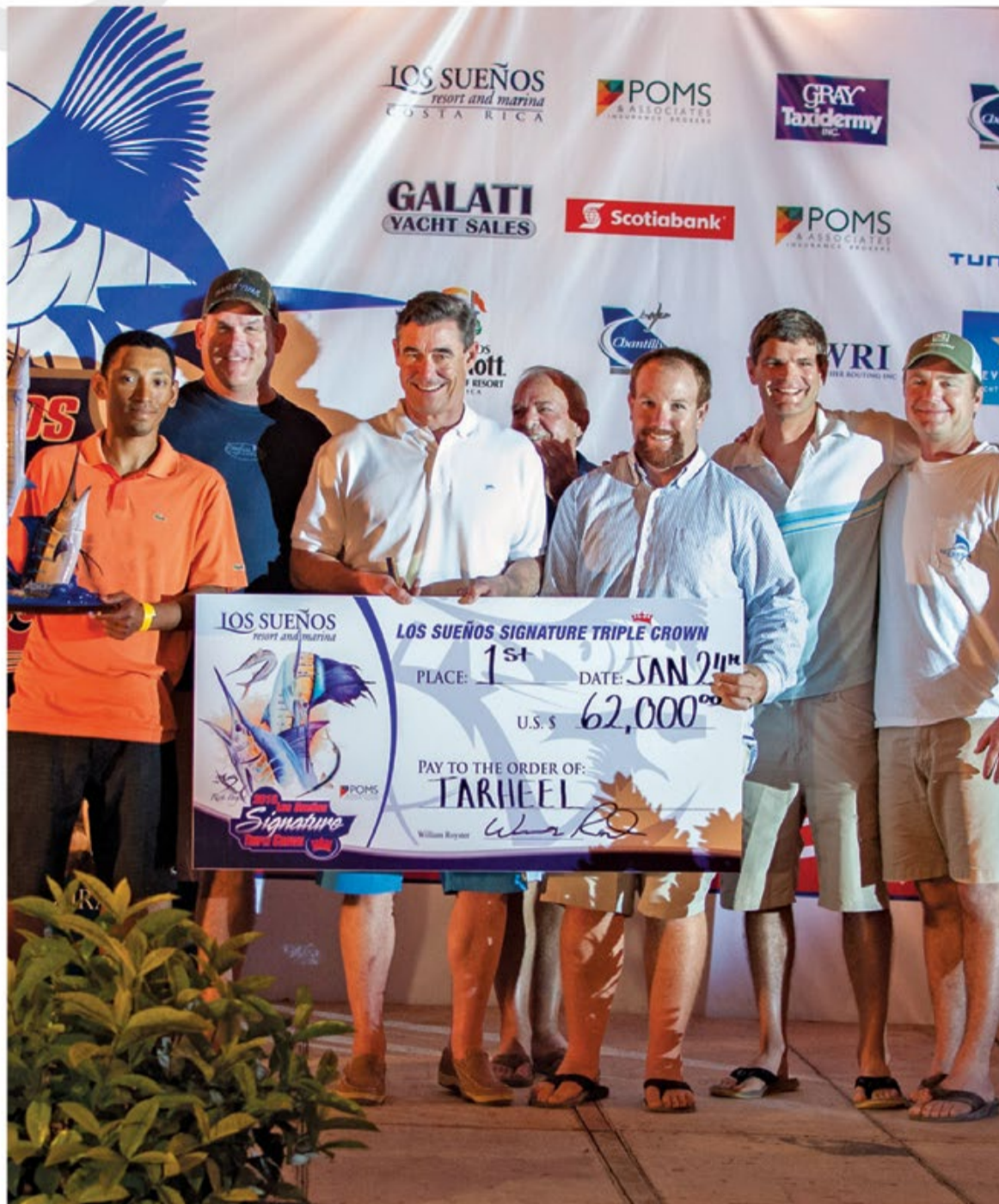
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For more information about the Bermuda Big Game Classic, call Tournament Director: Dan Jacobs at 407-571-4680 or e-mail dan.jacobs@bonniercorp.com



Lines In Tournament Report



The crew aboard *Tarheel* released 108 sailfish to win the first leg of the Los Sueños Signature Triple Crown.

than one fish per minute, tallying over 100 releases by 9:00 a.m. Following the noon update for Day One, *Trophy Box* stood in first place with 2,400 points and held a 300-point lead over *Pescadora*. The crew aboard *Wire We Here* and *Team Galati* both earned 1,900 points and were tied for third with plenty of time left. At 2:26 p.m., *Pescadora* moved into first with a sailfish release for a total of 3,600 points. *Trophy Box* jumped 500 points at 2:58 p.m. with a marlin release to tie *Pescadora* on points, and *Wire We Here* slipped into third, also tied for points, with a sailfish release at 3:10 p.m. *Tarheel* called in the first quadruple sailfish release of the tournament at 3:27 p.m. as the fishing continued to improve. It was *Wire We Here* who won the day, though, ending with 3,900 points, 200 points ahead of *Pescadora*, *Tarheel* and *Trophy Box*, all tied with 3,700 points. As boats returned from the fishing grounds, the field had released a total of 702 sailfish and eight marlin.

Day Two started off quickly with a double sailfish release at 8:07 a.m. by the crew aboard *Tranquilo*. The excitement throughout the day was paramount, driven by the high number of multiple releases, including a double by *Trophy Box* at 8:18 a.m., followed 10 minutes later by a double on *Wire We here*, and then the first of five quadruples on Day Two alone by *Trophy Box* at 8:29 in the morning. Doubles and triples were commonplace during the event, and by 10:34 a.m., *Wire We Here*, *Tarheel* and *Trophy Box* had each already released 15 sails. In the overall standings after the hot morning bite, *Pescadora* fell behind the other three boats by 1,000 points with a total of 4,200. At the end of the day, it was *Tarheel* on top of the daily leaderboard after releasing 47 sailfish for 4,700 points, as well as claiming top spot in the overall standings with 8,400 points from their 84 sailfish releases. *Wire We Here* trailed closely by 900 points and *Trophy Box* by 1,000 points.

Tarheel picked up right where they left off to start the third and final day

Tarheel Claims First Leg of Los Sueños Signature Triple Crown

HOT FISHING PRODUCES 2,130 SAILFISH AND 34 MARLIN RELEASES

Jan. 21-24, Playa Herradura, Costa Rica

The first leg of the 2015 Los Sueños Signature Triple Crown billfish series, held Jan. 21-24, set yet another record when hot fishing combined with the 157 individual anglers and a fleet of 39 boats. After the dust settled following the three days of fishing, the fleet released a total of 2,154 billfish, including 24 marlin and 2,130 sailfish.

Missing the mark by 16 releases to surpass the bar set during the inaugural event last year, this year's event forged a ratio of 55 releases per boat during the tournament.

Tuna Bite called in the first sailfish release of the tournament at 8:04 a.m. on the first day. Immediately after, *Team Galati* radioed in the release of a marlin at 8:05 a.m. By 8:30 a.m., the fleet throttled a release rate of greater



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Lines In Tournament Report

of the tournament, calling in the first sailfish release of the day just four minutes after lines in, and *Uno Mas* (Brooks Smith) called in a double less than one minute later. By 1:56 in the afternoon, the combined tournament total was 1,910 billfish, and by 3:30 p.m., participants and spectators alike were wondering if the teams would be able to surpass the remaining 101 fish needed to break the tournament record set during the first leg of the Signature Triple Crown the year prior. After 17 doubles, four triples and even a quadruple sailfish release by *Xta -Sea* called in to tournament control in less than an hour, the teams fell short of the record. In the end, the fleet set the series record for the highest fish-per-boat ratio in tournament history, previously recorded at 52 fish per boat with 2,170 releases by 42 teams set in January 2014. This year's 39 participating teams released a total of 2,154 billfish in three days of fishing for an average of 55 releases per boat. *Chasin Tail* put on a spectacular show on the third and final day of competition with 37 sailfish releases to take home the daily.

Despite rain showers earlier in the week, the weather was perfect for the awards ceremony on Saturday night. Held under the stars on the white sand in front of the Los Sueños Beach Club, guests enjoyed a phenomenal buffet dinner, a live musical performance and the highly anticipated dock show. However, the crew of *Tarheel*, John Bayliss, Robert Shore, E. Smyth McKissick, Carroll Brizendine and Wells Hula, took the spotlight during the evening for their performance throughout the entire tournament after releasing 108 sailfish for 10,800 points to claim first place and \$62,000 in winnings. *Wire We Here*, led by Capt. Scotty Jones and anglers J.R. Fleming, his sons Stephen and Hunter, and Michael Wells and Steve White released 93 sailfish and two marlin for 10,300 points to claim second place in the tournament and \$37,200. The team aboard *Trophy Box* included Capt. Ronnie Fields and anglers Gray Ingram, Watson Caviness, Paige Robertson and Jimmy Fields, who released 97 sailfish and one marlin for a total



Separated by only 100 points, *Wire We Here* and *Trophy Box* took home second and third places at Los Sueños.

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of 10,200 points to round out the top three with a payout of \$24,800. The next team behind the top three teams was *Pescadora*, who released 82 sailfish. Austin Angel aboard *Sea Angel* is a familiar face on the wall of champions in Los Sueños, and he was named Top Angler for the tournament once again. Austin released a total of 38 sails in the three days for 3,800 individual points. The ceremony commenced with a spectacular fireworks display and a jam-packed after-party at the Terrace Lounge in the Los Sueños Marina Village.

This year marks the second annual Los Sueños Signature Triple Crown billfish tournament series. The Triple Crown consists of three legs during January, February and March of each year, and it is fished out of the world-class Los Sueños Resort and Marina in Costa Rica. The second and third legs of the 2015 series will take place Feb. 25-28 and March 25-28. ☀

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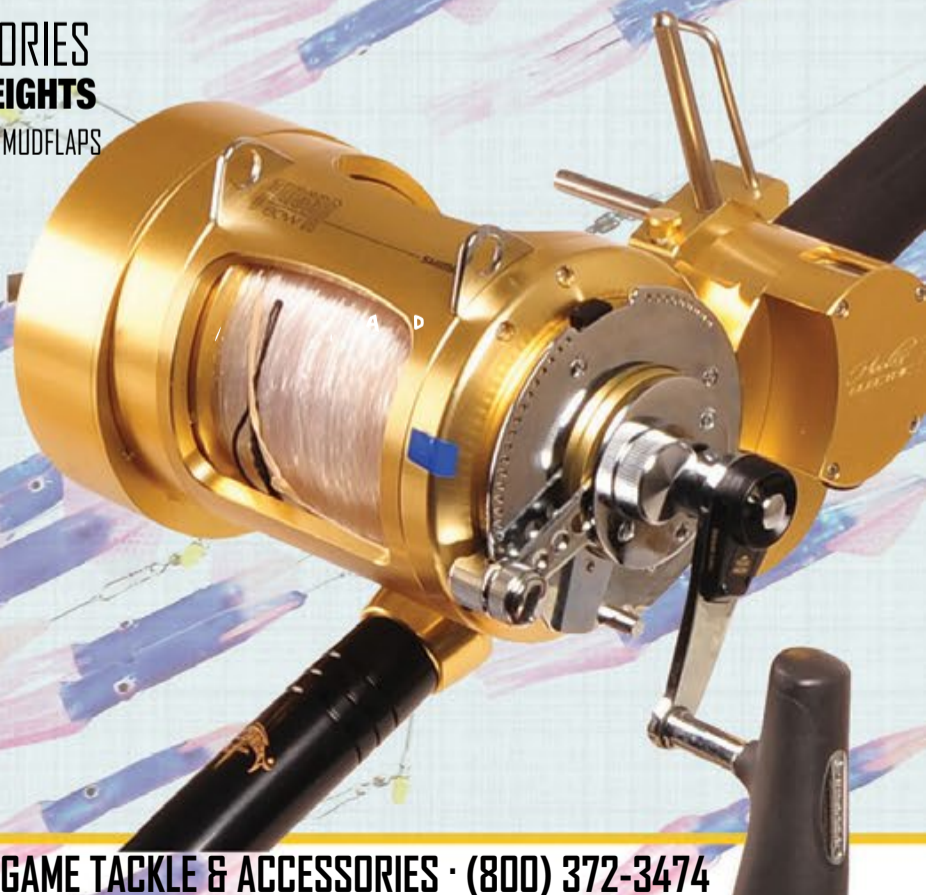


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F&S 75

THIS SERIOUS 75-FOOT FISHING MACHINE COMBINES HEAD-TURNING GOOD LOOKS WITH LUXURIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS

Blue Time, the new 75-footer from Delaware-based F&S Boatworks, is a single-minded, impeccably built custom boat designed and built solely to be a viable player on the fishing circuit. “When it comes to fishing, luxurious accommodations and everything else we would need, we did as much aboard as we could do,” says Capt. Bill Wieteha. “As much as we could and more.”

Wieteha has been with *Blue Time*’s owner through two previous production

boats. “He’s very competitive, as is his circle of sailfishing friends, and we were looking for a boat that could fill that need,” he says. In between their visits to other builders, a 72-foot F&S named *Momo* came into their home port at the Cocoplum Yacht Club in Coral Gables, Florida. That visit and the ensuing getting-to-know-you-time resulted in a phone call to Jim Floyd, the company’s inspirational founding force at F&S. Finding out a 75 jig was available, they came to terms, and *Blue Time* was

contracted to be built.

Form ever follows function, which becomes obvious when either admiring *Blue Time*’s lines as she sits at the dock or, even better, while underway. Her design, shape and profile are first and foremost based on her intended purpose. Low, sleek and appearing as if in constant motion, she is in perfect proportion to her length. Whether viewing her landing strip foredeck, the gentle slope of the house with its familiar black brow or the open bridge design with its



massive and fully functional Palm Beach tower, everything about *Blue Time* is in harmony and balance. And even up on the bow, her removable casting station and flush-mounted livewell make sense.

INTERIOR

Blue Time's owner wanted the kind of creature comforts only a big boat could supply. And with Wieteha working closely with the F&S designers and planners, the accommodations layout delivers on all counts. Entering from the cockpit mezzanine through an actuated sliding door, a day head lies directly to starboard. "This was a necessity for us," says Wieteha. "The last thing you want on a boat like this is a crew of fishermen

***Blue Time* can carry a lot of live bait in two 55-gallon transom wells and two big deck wells, which can be stored belowdecks.**

trailing through the salon with blood, guts and scales all over them."

The expansive salon has C-shaped seating to port with a Release Marine custom teak table featuring storage below. "They made it so we could have this space for taking meals as well," Wieteha says as he demonstrated how easily it transforms into a dining platform. The fully found galley lies forward; opposite, a spacious dinette, under which is an electrically operated rod storage drawer. Of particular note here is the distinctive overhead cutout that adds an effective and special design statement to the area.

A beautiful wood console houses a 75-inch HD television, electrical panel, bar and extra storage spaces. *Blue Time* has a four-stateroom, five-head layout with a full-beam master, which has its own 75-inch HD television. No matter where I visited in the accommodations areas, I found superior woodwork, excellent headroom, fastidious attention to detail and ample space for all fishing tackle and gear, including a dedicated walk-in closet forward of the galley for kites and related equipment.

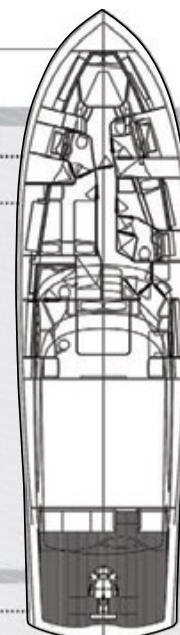
COCKPIT

"We do a lot of live-bait fishing, perhaps 80 percent of the time, and as big as she is, we wanted to make her complete with some innovations we feel many other rigs do not have," Wieteha said as we reviewed the inventory list of fishing amenities. He had the transom designed for a pair of 55-gallon livewells with the ability to run both with just one pump. The wells can also be pressurized while the boat is running to prevent any sloshing around in a big sea and injuring or killing the bait.

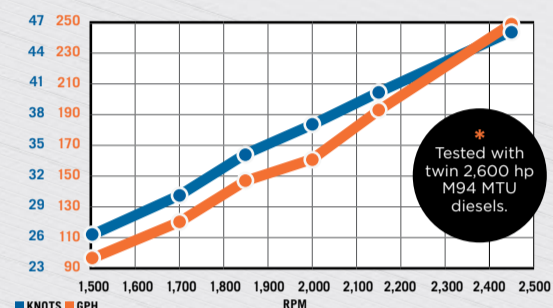
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> SPECIFICATIONS

LOA:	75'
BEAM:	20'9"
WEIGHT:	93,000 lb. (dry)
FUEL:	2,800 gal.
WATER:	400 gal.
POWER:	Twin 2,600 hp M94 MTUs



> PERFORMANCE



CONTACT INFO:

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Release chair, with its custom reel seat back that Wieteha designed, sat a pair of above-deck fiberglass wells. "I supplied those through my own company, Offshore Bait Solutions, specifically for *Blue Time*. If switching over to, let's say, marlin fishing, we can break them down, including all the plumbing, and store everything elsewhere in a matter of minutes," Wieteha says.

Other features of the 170-square-foot cockpit include the mezzanine seating area, tackle storage, three large stainless-steel-lined freezers, a pair of



BOATS OF INTEREST

Twin 2,600 hp M94 MTU diesels provide a cruise speed of 37 knots at 2,100 rpm. She hits almost 46 knots wide open.

KEP networked monitors, a Freeman watertight lazarette hatch, tuna tubes in the aft baitwells and an Eskimo ice maker, among many other accessories.

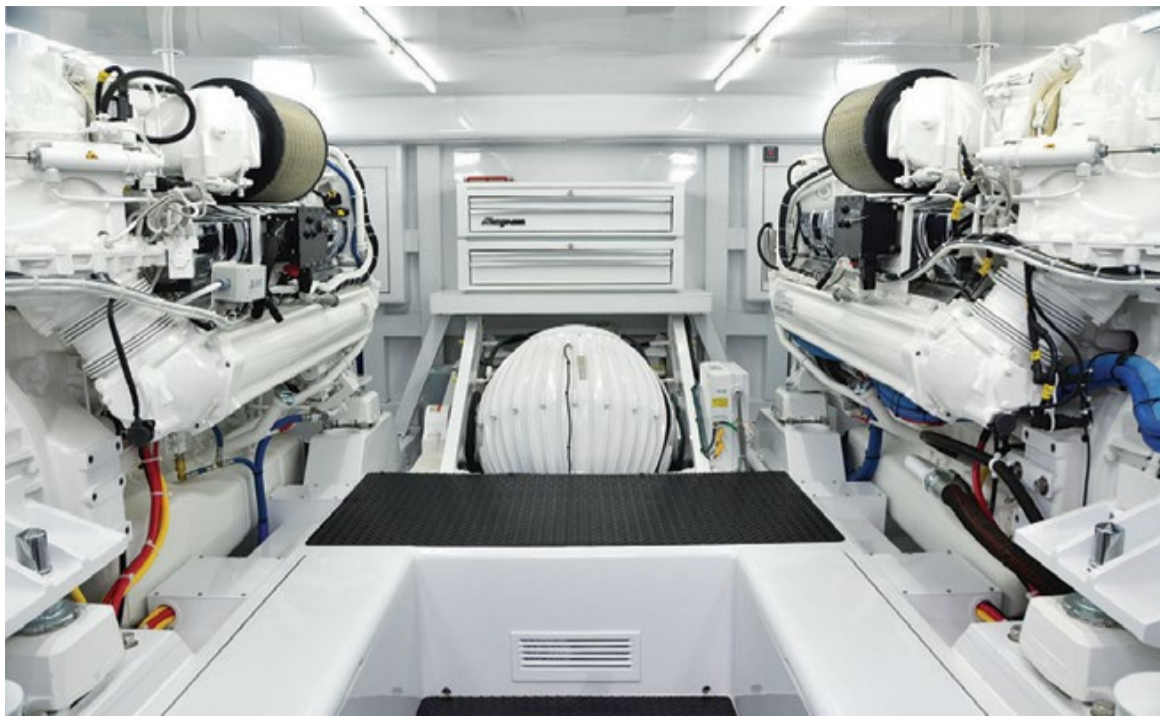
BRIDGE

There are 11 rod holders on the aft rail of the bridge and three Release pedestal seats — and that's just for openers. "We're doing a lot of kite-fishing right now," Wieteha says, "so I had Palm Beach Towers put a center grommet here for me to just clip my line to. It's a small thing but comes in real handy for us." With her busy fishing schedule, being able to transition quickly over to species-specific techniques is an important ability for the crew. There are spreaders all the way around on the tower, and the entire area around the boat can be lit up at night for dipping bait.

When I climbed to the top, I found a gray-painted platform underfoot to cut down on glare, all the antennas placed topside, as well as all the controls, wheel and equipment set just right to allow Wieteha to have optimum visibility while fishing. The island-style helm is well-laid out with all Garmin screens, throttles, radios and electric teaser reels in the overhead, in addition to all switches within easy sight and reach. There is plenty of seating for guests and, of course, the requisite storage areas, freezer and drink compartments.

ENGINE ROOM

Big boat, big engine room, big space to move around in. There's no argument here; with a 75-foot length and 20 feet, 9 inches of beam, *Blue Time* has the kind of engine room that offers space, space and more space. There's ample room for the 2,600 hp MTU mains, the pair of 32 kW Cummins Onan gensets, the M26000 Seakeeper gyro mounted in its own custom-made cradle on the centerline forward of the engines, and all of the pumps, water management and air-conditioning systems. The battery banks, electrical systems and the FCI 1,200 gpd watermaker were easily reached, as were all critical service areas. I found ample room to swing any kind of tool without getting into any knuckle-busting, elbow-twisting, head-banging or body-contorting situation. And, of course, it's all brightly lit and faired and finished



“Big boat, big engine room, big space to move around in. There's no argument here.”

off as meticulously as is her flawless white Awlcraft 2000 painted hull.

CONSTRUCTION

Blue Time's build took around 20 months. As with all boats of her class, there were challenges to be met, including designing in the necessary headroom and supplying the large storage spaces aboard, especially those associated with her fishing profile. She is built using diagonal-planked Okoume plywood, with three quarter-inch layers on the sides, three half-inch layers on the bottom, and one extra layer of half-inch beneath the engine room. Next comes one complete layer of 17-ounce biaxial cloth between the second and third layers of plywood, followed by two complete layers of that same cloth placed on the entire exterior of the hull. A layer of 12-ounce Kevlar covers the bottom, and another layer of 17-ounce is placed on the complete interior from the chines down. All the stringers, shear, chines and keel are constructed of clear vertical grain Douglas fir, while the topsides, from the shear up, are of Core-Cell and biaxial cloth.

PERFORMANCE

Running on her variable deadrise bottom with longitudinal steps, a design derived

from Floyd's SeaCraft days and one that he has adapted and evolved over the years to the sport-fishing sector, *Blue Time* is a spirited performer. A pair of 2,600 hp M94 MTU diesels, turning 38-by-56 Veem Interceptor five-blade wheels, power her. Being a release rather than a pressure design, the effect is a somewhat softer ride due to the aeration along the steps as pockets of air are trapped between the hull and the surface by those steps. That is transferred to the hull as it moves through the water.

And while test day saw calm seas with only a slight breeze, Wieteha did comment on her ability to cut through head-on and quartering waves, in addition to excellent stability with following seas. She jumped quickly up out of the hole and settled into an impressive 37-knot cruise speed at 2,000 rpm, a turn just over 40 knots at 2,150 rpm, and she hit almost 46 knots on the pins. With the multikeel effect of the vertical surfaces of the steps, she displayed superior directional stability and tracked straight and true during flat-out speed runs.

ON THE BITE

Since her launch in late December, *Blue Time* has participated in the Sailfish 400, the Sailfish Challenge and will fish the upcoming Jimmy Johnson National Billfish Championship; if their schedule allows, perhaps they will also participate in the Key West Tournament, some marlin fishing in the Abacos, possibly the Custom Boat Shootout, maybe a BBC or two, and a handful of others.

"That's what we're all about," says Wieteha. With a boat like *Blue Time*, I couldn't agree more. 🐟



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Bom Bom, Principe

RIVALING THE LANDSCAPES OF *JURASSIC PARK*, BLUE MARLIN, NOT DINOSAURS, AWAIT

Few places are magical enough to endure any type of logistics and costs to visit. They must be remote but still within reach of commercial airports, and the fishing has to be world class. Boats, captains, crew and equipment must be the best available, and shots at game fish are plentiful. When traveling, I want to stay in comfort, eat the seafood I catch and have an overall experience I consider to be worthy enough to share my experiences. Bom Bom is just that.

Bert Bouchard, an IGFA-certified captain, owns not one, but two of the best built G&S game boats ever to tag a marlin. Bouchard commissioned G&S to completely rebuild his 41-foot *Deceiver*

and 43-foot *Hebe* G&S sport-fishermen from the tower to the keel before being shipped overseas. To add to that, he even refurbished a classic 31-foot Bertram to complement his fleet. Bouchard could fish his boats anywhere in the world, but they will soon be moored at Bouchard's brand-new game-fishing lodge a hundred miles off the shore of west Africa, on the island of Bom Bom. Just a nickname, "Bom Bom" is technically a rock that is part of Principe.

Instead of describing this beautiful island paradise to you myself as a visitor, Marnie Saidi describes her home by saying, "Principe Island, belonging to the Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe, juts out of the Atlantic in the Gulf of Guinea off the west coast of Africa, and it is home to a population of around 7,500 people. An ex-Portuguese colony, Principe is geographically Africa, but is in essence a world unto itself, bringing together ancient traditions from the coastland and centuries-old Portuguese culture into a melting pot that makes it unique."

Don't be fooled by the *leve leve* attitude of the locals; community living on Bom Bom drives the local hive of activity.

SURPRISES WORTH WAITING FOR

The airport's 800-meter runway is serviced by STP Airways, and it is currently under rehabilitation to transform it into an airport meeting international standards. Currently, travelers on international flights head to São Tomé, the larger sister island, and then connect onto Principe. The easiest route to arrive in São Tomé is through Lisbon, Portugal, but connections can also be made through Angola. Flying to the island on a clear, sunny day is like arriving at the opening scene of *Jurassic Park*. The greens of the tropical jungle, transparent blues and greens of the sea, and the yellow beaches are dramatically interspersed by the mountain peaks in the center of the island spanning 53 square miles.

A visitor to the island could be fooled by the *leve leve* (calmly calmly) attitude of the local population. While appearing on the outside to be taking life easy, the reality is a hive of activity just below the surface. People grab an early start and rise at 5 a.m. as the light is breaking to prepare the fires for breakfast and fetch water for their daily use in their wooden-stilt houses. Community living is still very important, and a visitor



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Wahoo and sailfish

MARCH - JUNE

Sailfish and the beginning of blue marlin season

JUNE - SEPTEMBER

Peak season for blue marlin

SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER

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Capt. Bert Bouchard

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gets the feel for the morning bustle during this time of day. The market on the island's capital, Santo Antonio, offers fish, plantains, bananas and a few imported vegetables. Several interesting spices foraged from the lush forests are also available and used in local dishes like *kalulu*, *molho no fogo* and *iza quente*, served in several small wooden bars around the town.

UP-AND-COMING

Having been left mostly to its own devices since independence from the Portuguese, Príncipe became of interest in recent years to foreign investors developing the points of interest for tourism. In addition to constructing beach resorts, they rehabilitated old colonial homes found on cocoa and coffee plantations called *roças*. The island was granted UNESCO's Biosphere

Reserve status, and the regional government plans to grow through sustainable tourism. There is one luxury beach resort, Bom Bom Island Resort, and one plantation hotel, Roça Belo Monte, in addition to a few lower-quality hotels in the town.

PULL THE DREDGES

The blue marlin peak season is June through August, and a dozen shots pulling lures is just a ho-hum day. If you want to see something really crazy, set out the dredges and you'll be bait-and-switching till your arms come off. When Bom Bom really goes off, it rivals anywhere else found on the planet! The buildup to the full moons in peak season is nothing short of magic. You had better be well-rested and in good shape, or Bouchard and his crew will wear you out. If for some silly reason you want to take a break from releasing blues, the wahoo and sailfish on the edge or the massive yellowfin schools can offer a change-up. This year is going to be a special year in Bom Bom: Bouchard set offshore FADs this past winter, and he is planning on live-baiting the FADs when the big girls and granders show up. We will see what it brings.

Bouchard sums up fishing on Bom Bom as a "year-round fishery," and the billfishing offshore can be as hot as any marlin fishing found anywhere. Bouchard is one of the best marlin fishermen in the world, and his G&S boats are hard to beat. I guess you'll know where to find me this summer when the bite heats up. The sign over the bar at the new lodge pretty much sums it up: "If it doesn't have a bill, it is just bait." 🐟

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TAP Airlines provides flights from Portugal to São Tomé. flytap.com

STP Airways offers flights from Portugal to São Tomé and São Tomé to Príncipe Island. www.stpairways.st

Angolan Airlines supplies flights from Luanda to São Tomé. taag.com

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Roça Belo Monte Plantation Hotel
belomontehotel.com

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NEED TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

In order to travel to São Tomé, you must first apply for a travel visa. If you reside in a country that has a São Tomé Consulate, you can apply in person for a visitor's visa. Alternatively, you can apply online at www.smf.st/virtualvisa, and the site has a seven-day response time. However, I advise that you apply well in advance of that time frame for the visa because it can be a bit tricky online, and it often needs to be submitted multiple times for the system to accept it successfully.

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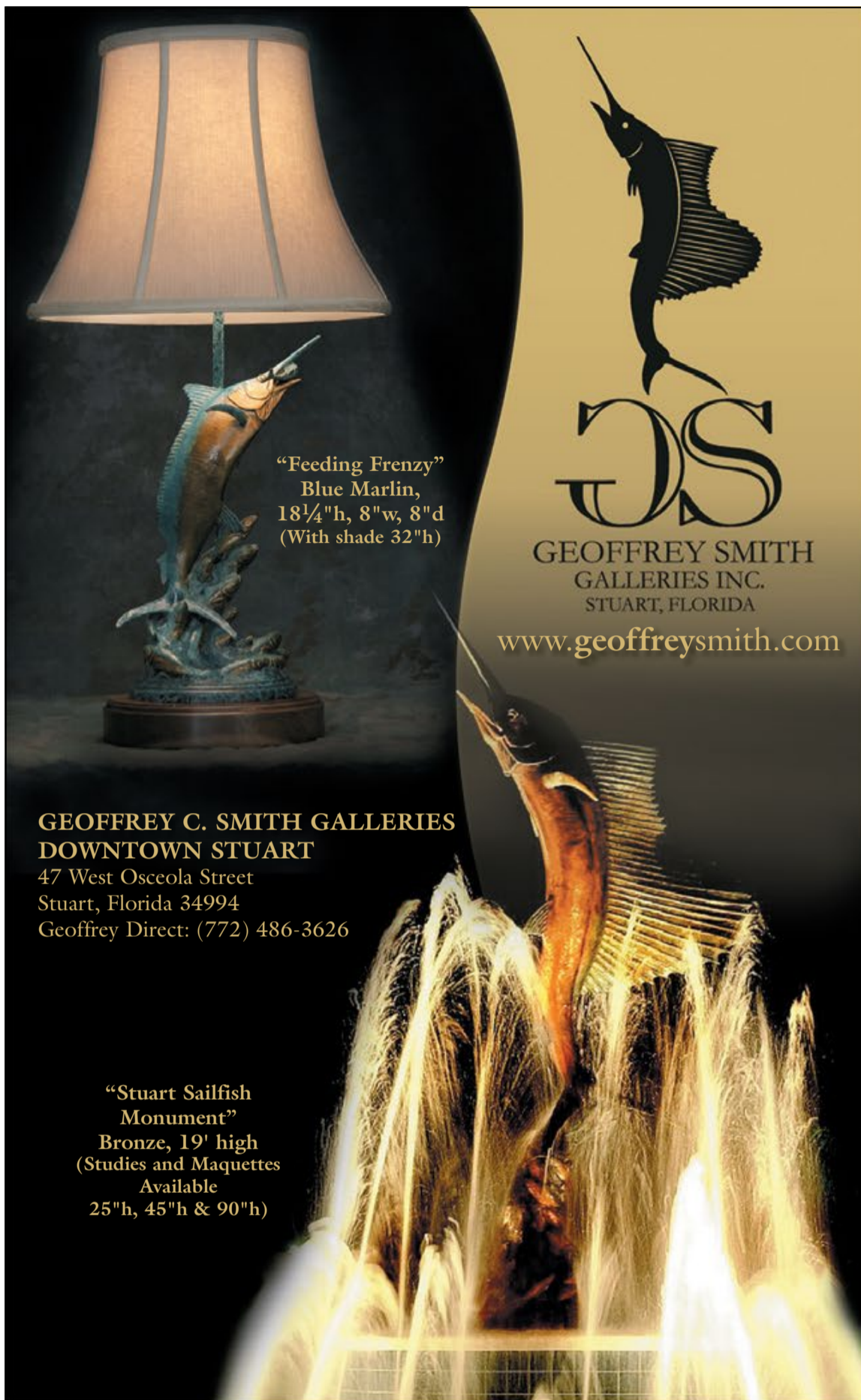
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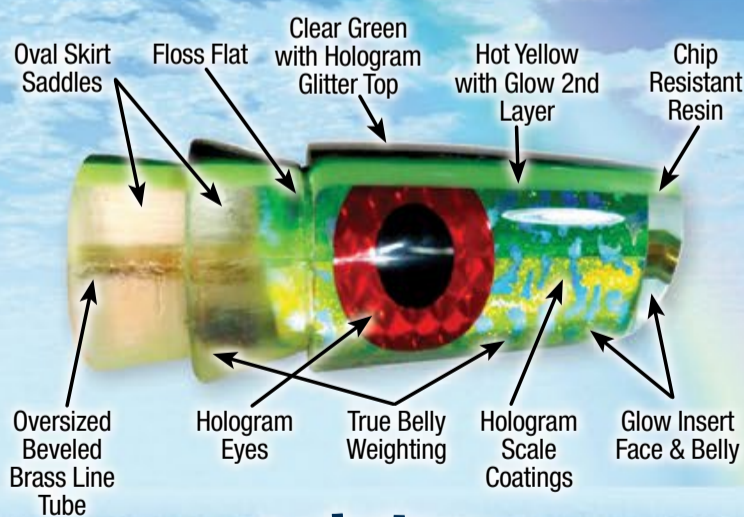
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61' Viking 2004 - Call Chris: 757.509.0742



61' Viking 2001 - Call John D: 910.262.5566



60' Custom Carolina 1983 - Call Ben: 252.241.7757



60' Viking 2012 - Call Jud: 757.846.7909



60' Hatteras 2005 - Call Howard: 252.241.4831



58' Custom Carolina 2003 - Call Ben: 252.241.7757



57' Ocean 2004 - Call John D: 910.262.5566



56' Paul Mann 2009 - Call Peter: 252.725.3133



55' Viking 2003 - Call Hank: 804.337.1945



54' Hatteras 2005 - Call Clark: 919.669.1304



54' Hatteras 2005 - Call Mark: 757.406.1673



54' Custom Carolina 1999 - Call Roger: 410.456.3659



52' Viking 2016 - On Order, Coming Soon!



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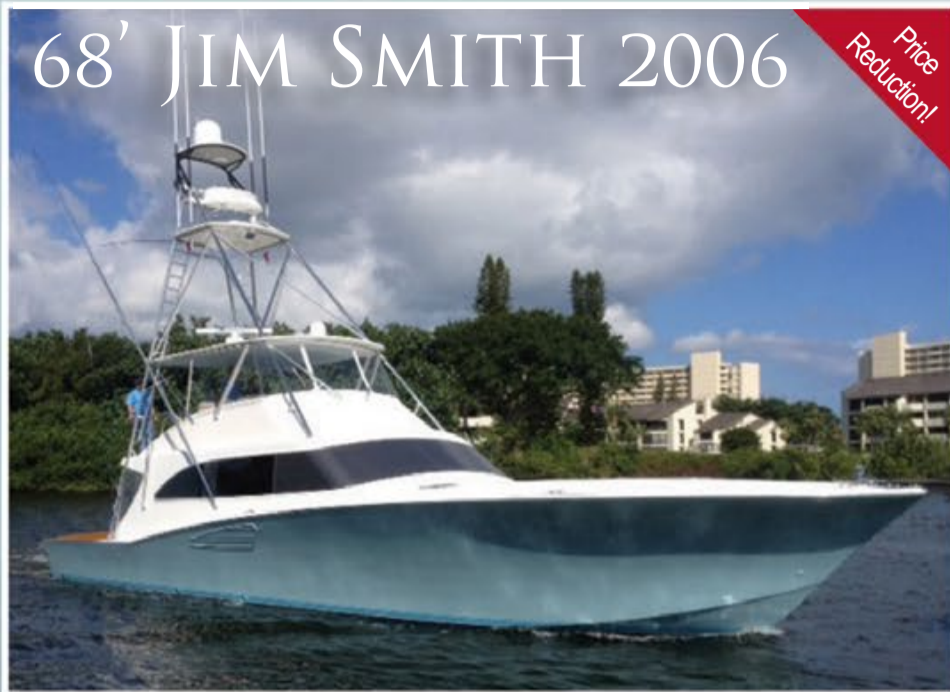
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MIMI

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74' SPENCER 2017. New Build - Est Completion Aug 2016. CAT C32's. Bow thruster, Seakeeper, 4 Cabins. Master forward or midship, have a galley island w/ stools or peninsula with dinette, add a wine chiller, cockpit grill, the selections are yours at this time.



69' SPENCER 2016. New Build - Est Completion Feb 2016. 1925 hp CAT C-32's. PipeWelders tower. 4 Cabins, Bow thruster, Seakeeper, 2 Gens, Spot Zero Water Polishing System, Livos Mist Eliminator System, Underwater Exhaust.



GIVE IT AWAY – 57' CAROLINA DIXON BOATWORKS 2004. 1500 hp 12 cyl MANs. Custom hardtop, teak helm pod. 3/2, Bosch W/D, 2010 full mezzanine seating, Latham camera system, tuna tubes, Eskimo ice chipper.

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Repowered in 2012 with C-32As. Provides a 30 kt. cruise, holds 3300 gallons of fuel. Incredible 4 stateroom / 4 head layout. She's built to travel with redundant equipment and she shows very nice. Don't miss this one! Contact Worldwide Central Agent.



72' TRIBUTE 2007

4 stateroom / 3 head layout, plus a huge tackle room. Powered by Cat C-32As boasting a 35 kt cruise, burning 112 gph. She has a beautiful cherry wood interior accented by rich leathers and exotic marbles. She's ready to go anywhere. Contact Worldwide Central Agent.



83' SEA FORCE IX 2007. A fishing battleship with the comforts of a motor yacht. 2400 hp 16V2000s provide a 29 kt cruise. 4 SR / 4 head layout, tremendous salon with top of the line equipment, and a fisherman's cockpit. Built by a highly knowledgeable owner, this boat has it all and can do it all. Contact Worldwide Central Agent.



66' HINES FARLEY 2002. 1850hp MTUs provide 35kt cruise, 3 large staterooms, 3 heads. Beautiful Cuban mahogany interior w/ superior finish work. Incredible cockpit area w/ spectacular ride in heavy seas. Very nice boat! Contact Worldwide Central Agent.



65' MARK WILLIS 1998. 3412 CATs, 1350hp provide a 28.5 kt cruise. 2500 gal of fuel for long range capabilities. 3 staterooms featuring exquisite African mahogany wood throughout. Incredible fishing history & in mint condition. Contact Worldwide Central Agent.



65' MONTEREY 1993. Twin 3412s provide 26 knot cruise. 4 stateroom 3 head layout, set up to travel w/ 1900 gal fuel. Recent updates include: new hardtop, electronic controls, Garmin electronics, (2) 25kW Phasor generators and more. Well kept and represents a tremendous value for this size range. Contact Worldwide Central Agent.



60' JIM SMITH 1986. 10 Cyl MANs provide 30 kt cruise @ 60 gph. 2 staterooms w/ companionway berths, 2.5 heads. Absolutely in perfect condition and has been completely redone & ready to go anywhere right now. Contact Worldwide Central Agent.



57' BERTRAM 2008. Twin Caterpillar 1650hp C-32s w/ 29kt cruise. 3 SR/3 head layout. She was 2008 Bertram demo boat, equipped w/ 2 Gyros, A/C mezzanine and top-of-the-line electronics. Proven tournament winner. Numerous recent updates, super clean & maintained w/ an open checkbook. Contact Worldwide Central Agent.



56' SCARBOROUGH 1993. 2005 900hp Commonrail Mans. Very economical with an amazing Carolina ride. New paint and mezzanine and other fantastic updates done in 2013. This is a very nice boat. Contact Worldwide Central Agent.



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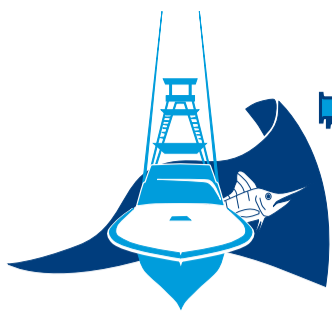


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62' WINTER CUSTOM YACHTS SPORTFISH 2008. New to Market with twin CAT C32's/1550HP engines. Low hours! 3/2 Carolina-styled Custom Sportfish built for a serious tournament fishing team. Beautiful teak interior with Granite countertops, U-shaped sofa seating, custom dinette, mezzanine seating, Release Marine chairs, Baush American Tower and hardtop. Large teak cockpit. Priced to sell and won't last long.



60' SPENCER 2013. Twin CAT C18s 1150hp with ext warranties, customized at American Custom Yachts with tuna tubes, sea keeper gyro, bow tank live well. Teak deck, teak covering boards, mezzanine seating, side scanning sonar. Too many options to list. Current record holder for most blue marlin in one season. New paint just completed at American Custom Yachts. Engine service work just completed (10/14).



70' JARRETT BAY 2008. New 2400 MTUs refit in 2011 with engines warranty until May 2016. A rare opportunity to purchase one of the fastest and most elegant sportfishing boats on the market. 4 staterooms, 3 heads. Cruise 37 kts, top end 46 kts. Easy to show. Located in Palm Beach.



58' CUSTOM CAROLINA DEAN JOHNSON 2005. If you're in the market for a Proven Fish Raising Machine that has been professionally maintained, this is the boat for you. Cat C-18 power, 1000HP. The Northern Lights generator, Sea Recovery 60 gallon an hour watermaker, Eskimo ice chipper, Garmin Electronics have all been replaced within the last two seasons. Mezzanine. Too many upgrades to list.



68' WEAVER BOATWORKS 2008. Beautiful custom sportfish now offered for sale. New to market 4 stateroom / 3 head layout with teak mezzanine. 2400 HP MTU M93 engines, easy 38 kt cruise! 48kt top end! One of the finest Weavers built. Highly customized interior. (2) 25 kw Northern Lights Generators, Eskimo icemaker, watermaker, SAT TV, teak bulkhead, engine room cameras, bow thruster, LOADED! Call to set up a sea trial and see for yourself the unbelievable ride.



60' MERRITT 1987. Refurbished in 2010. Repowered in 2007 with MAN V10-1100s, 2 gens, 2 Eskimo icemakers, mezzanine seating, new Palm Beach Tower, economical 60gph at cruise, low hours. Well maintained. One of a kind. Must see, shows like new!



64' CAISON YACHTS 2006. Economical with C32s @ 1650hp. Just completed (10/14) paint job by American Custom Yachts, new teak deck, new enclosure, new carpet, upgraded electronics, watermaker, icemaker, bottom work (Sept. 2014).



41' RIVIERA 2008. 350 gpd Watermaker, 12kw gen, Bow thruster, Raymarine electronics, flat screen TVs. Includes 48' slip at the Sportfishing Club Mindelo, Sao Vicente in Cape Verde! Only 980 engine hours. All the big cage fishing equipment is included.



55' Custom Carolina Caterpillar. C12s w/24-25 kt. cruise, burns around 40 gph. N. Lights 12KW gen, Bluewater 130 lb. fighting chair and 22 rod holders. Laid out as a charter boat, she is rigged for comfort. Very efficient for daily fishing or to travel with a crew.



45' RICKY SCARBOROUGH EXPRESS CUSTOM CAROLINA 1992. Cummins QSM11 625 hp engs. NEW: interior, head system, batteries, bridge cushions, EZ2CY enclosure & bow deck paint. Fight chair redone. Cruises 28 knots @ 34 gpm @ 1850 rpm. Carolina ride.



57' ISLAND BOATWORKS 2014. Winner of the 2013 White Marlin Open. Twin C32 Cats 1650hp with 3-year warranties. 41 kt cruise and 48 kt top speed. Multi-level cockpit mezzanine seating, Sat HDTV, wireless internet, electric door, bait freezer.



55' RICKY SCARBOROUGH 2001. Meticulously maintained, ext paint job, new hardtop, frame and curtains, 130 gallon FW tank and new teak coverboards in 2011/12. Low hours on 12 cylinder MANs, 12 kw Onan generator, Eskimo ice maker.



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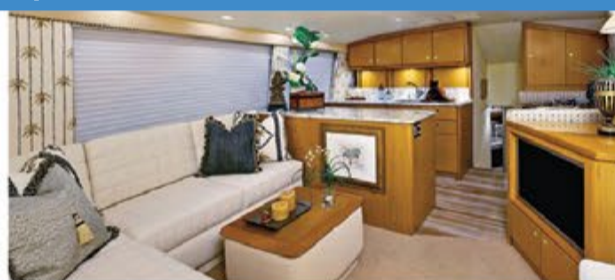
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Connectors

LEARN TO JOIN LINES AND LEADERS CORRECTLY

A recent email asked, “What kind of connection device should I use between my line and my leader?”

I often answer “none at all.” In many kinds of fishing, especially when releasing lively fish, it is advantageous to have a leader that is of lower breaking strain than the line. Leaving a circle hook in a fish’s jaw with only a very short length of leader connected to the hook is far less likely to do major damage to the fish. Handling the fish — especially dragging it on board for photos — greatly increases the probability of a mortal wound, and, after all, we were trying to release a healthy fish with a good chance of long-term survival.

This can be easily attained with monofilament leaders of slightly different breaking strain and a simple knot known as a double uni-knot. Both lines are tied around the other line, and after being pulled tight around the adjoining line, the knots are slipped down to oppose each other with only a short length of the heavier leader in play.

Three-way swivels can be handy when anchored, or when drifting and fishing baits down deep. I recently saw legendary Captain Bouncer Smith in a video that made me go out and buy some bank sinkers and three-way swivels. A simple but strong knot ties the main fishing line to the swivel. A short length of light leader is tied to another one of the three eyes, and a loop is tied in the other end. The loop can then be pushed through the eye of the bank sinker, and the sinker is then slipped through the eye.

The baited hook and the leader that will actually catch the fish is sometimes made of wire or small diameter nylon-coated cable if the target species is known to have sharp teeth. When fishing for the truly giant species like marlin and tuna, valuable fish are sometimes lost when a metal connection between the fishing line and the leader fails. This can often be due to the accidental use of a swivel or snap swivel that is simply not strong enough for the usage to which it is applied.

A basic swivel with a loop on each end

and no snap arrangement can help reduce line twist. This can be very important. These come in an enormous range of sizes and strengths, and there is no simple answer. The less-expensive connectors can rust if not rinsed off after being used in salt water and will no longer spin freely, leading to twisted and tangled lines.

Nylon monofilament will break at a

application, one with the connection being between a wind-on leader and a “trace” leader, the failure is frequently due to an overzealous deckhand.

The development of new specialized wiring gloves used on both mono and wire leader have almost eliminated the torn and bruised wounds to the hands called, erroneously, “wire cuts.” This has, in turn, allowed strong young men to pull harder with less pain. A more skilled mate will always keep his elbows slightly bent in order to try to avoid breaking heavy leader.

When a mate allows his arms to become pulled straight, then pulls with his legs and back and does not let go, leaders can break. This often happens when a big fish shakes his head under strain that the mate can hold briefly but can not actually lift.

Snap swivels have a sort of safety-pin device to allow quick and easy changing of leaders with either baits or lures.

There is an enormous differential in the



“When fishing for the truly giant species like marlin and tuna, valuable fish are sometimes lost when a metal connection between the fishing line and the leader fails.”

small fraction of its nominal breaking strength if it is twisted and forms even a single loop knot. Twisted lines quickly break when the loops form real knots.

A package of ball-bearing swivels usually states the force that is supposed to be needed to make it fail. This might or might not be an accurate rating! The only way a crew can ever know the real limits of their connectors is to test them.

Having a leader man break the leader after the angler has finally succeeded in bringing the fish close enough to the boat to almost gaff or tag creates a terrible end to a wonderful fight. In a more modern and more sophisticated

quality, strength and longevity in different brands of snaps. Even the very best will not last forever, and the more times snap swivels have been opened and closed, the more likely they are to fail.

For truly heavy tackle with 400-pound or heavier leaders, I sometimes use ball-bearing swivels rated at 500 pounds and a small stainless-steel shackle instead of a snap swivel. These are most easily found at marine hardware stores or windsurfing shops, rarely in tackle stores. Once again, get help from your local tackle store. The owner wants to help you catch fish and become a friend and regular customer! 🎣



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